# Suki™

A Like Story

3

CLAMP

VIZ SELECT

"I LIKE YOU.
THAT'S WHY I LIKE YOU."

New Vocabulary

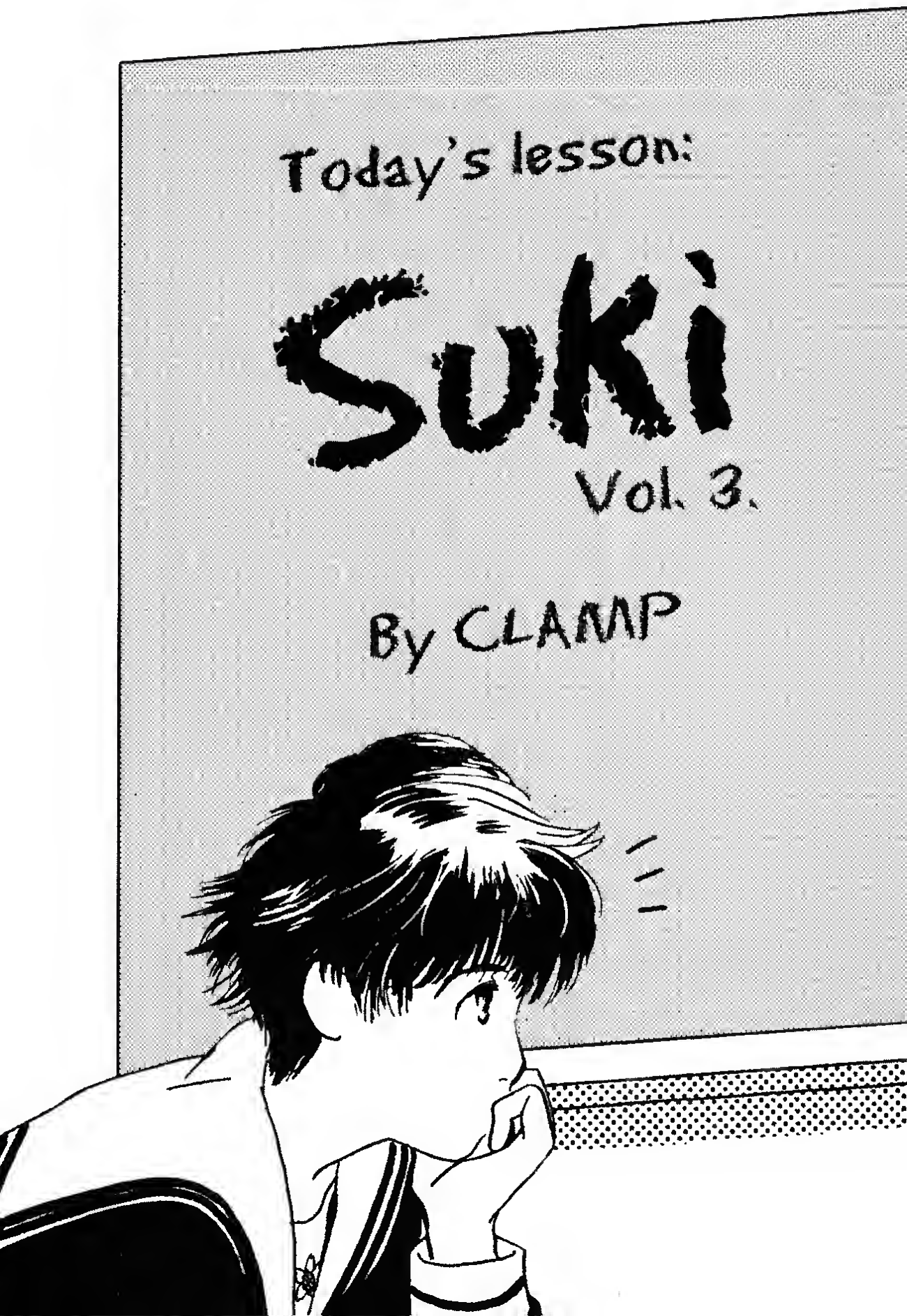
"Suki" - To Like

"Daisuki" - To Love

"Suki, Dakara Suki" - "I Like You, That's Why I Like You"

Homework

Pgs. 1-192


Today's lesson:
Suki
Vol. 3.
By CLAMP

**Suki Vol. 3**
Created by CLAMP

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## THE STORY SO FAR...

FIRST-YEAR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT HINATA ASAHI LEADS A SOLITARY LIFE, WITH ONLY HER TWO TEDDY BEARS TO KEEP HER COMPANY. THAT IS, UNTIL THE MYSTERIOUS SHIRO ASOU MOVES IN NEXT DOOR. THIS TALL, DARK AND HANDSOME MAN ISN'T JUST HINA'S NEIGHBOR—HE'S ALSO HER NEW TEACHER! HINA'S FRIENDS ARE SUSPICIOUS OF THE NEW TEACHER, AND FOR GOOD REASON. AFTER ALL, COULD A MAN NEARLY TWICE HINA'S AGE HAVE GOOD INTENTIONS? WHATEVER ASOU'S INTENTIONS TOWARD HINA ARE, THEY'RE MORE THAN THOSE OF A TEACHER TOWARD A STUDENT. UNBEKNOWNST TO HINA, ASOU HAS BEEN SPYING ON HER WITH SECRET SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS AND DISCUSSING HER, HIS "JOB," WITH SHADY ASSOCIATES. WHEN WE LEFT OFF, THE EVER-TRUSTING HINA HAD INVITED ASOU-SENSEI AND HIS "FRIENDS" OVER FOR DINNER, WHEN THE LIGHTS SUDDENLY SHUT OFF...

# SUKI™

# 11

I LOVE YOU AFTER ALL!
I TRULY LOVE YOU.

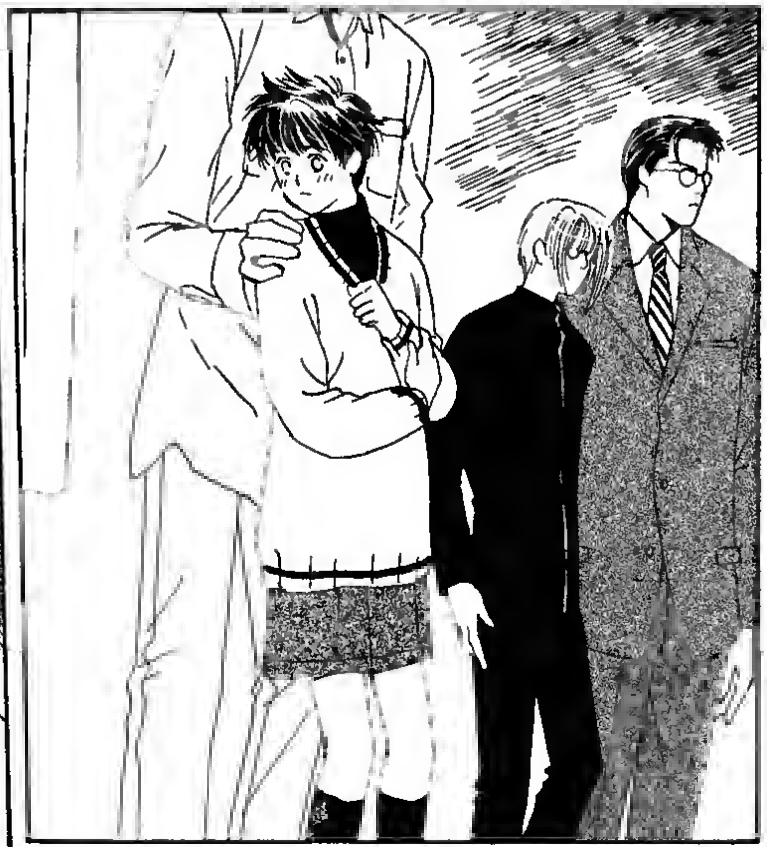
DO YOU LOVE ME?

YOUR HOUSE IS SET TO 80 AMPERES. THE POWER SHOULDN'T GO OUT SO EASILY.
MAYBE THE FUSES WENT OUT...
...TOMO-AKI-SAN.

...OKAY.

DON'T MAKE A SOUND.
STAND UP SLOWLY.

MY BACK... IT FEELS SO WARM...



BEEP
カチン
BEEP
WHAT WAS THAT?!

KIZU!
SENSEI!
STAY HERE.

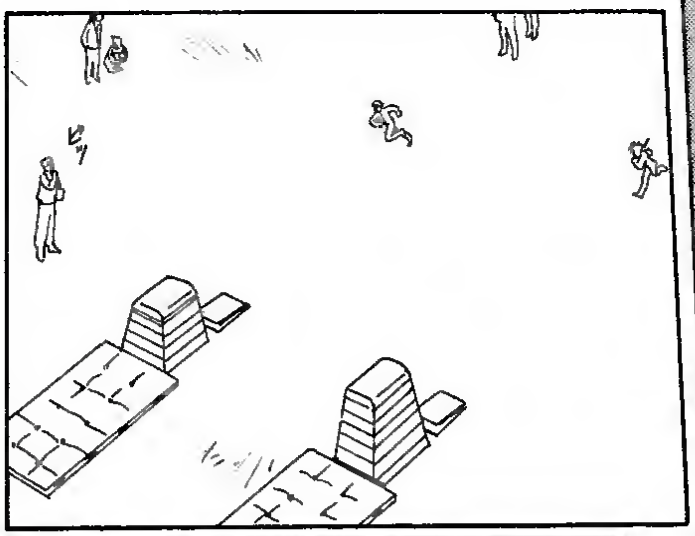
SHIRO CAN TAKE CARE OF HIMSELF.
BUT SENSEI...!

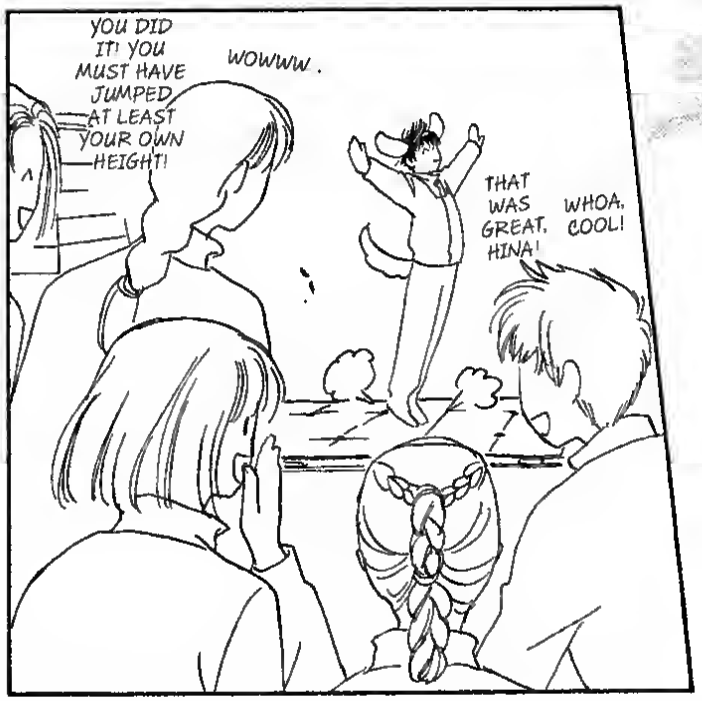
バタン
トントントン
ガチャ

SENSEI!
HE GOT AWAY?
YEAH.
I HEARD FOOTSTEPS. WAS SOMEONE INSIDE?

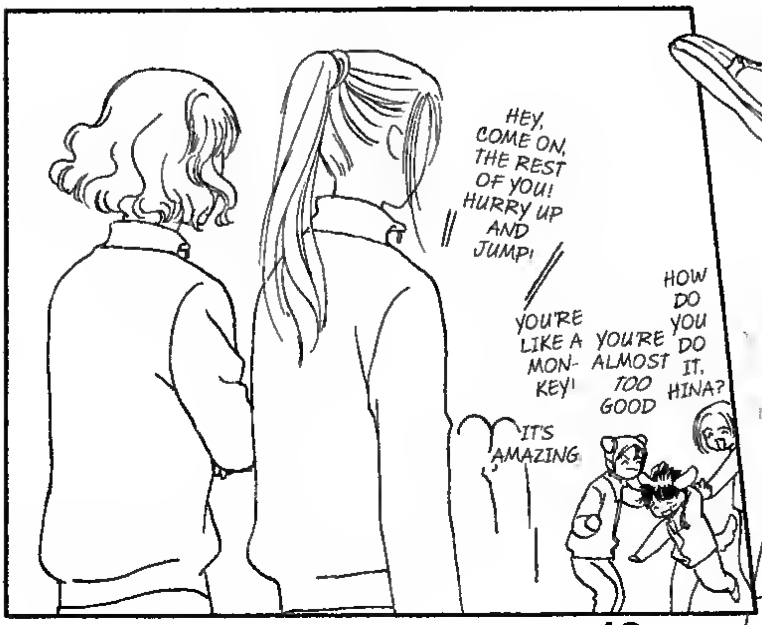
BUT WHY WOULD A PROFESSIONAL BAD PERSON BE IN MY HOUSE?
?
...AT DOING BAD THINGS.
WELL, JUDGING FROM ALL THE NOISE HE MADE, AND ALL THE GLASS HE BROKE, I'D SAY HE WASN'T A PROFESSIONAL.
PROFES-SIONAL?
PROFESSIONAL AT WHAT?
WAIT ...COME TO THINK OF IT...
...LOOK...
HOW DID YOU KNOW THE AMPERE LEVEL OF MY HOUSE, ANYWAY?
...SENSEI!
WHY WOULD YOU DO THAT, SENSEI?
YOU SAW THE ELECTRICAL PANEL FOR MY HOUSE?
WELL, UH
...I JUST HAPPENED TO SEE IT THE OTHER DAY.

OH!
I WAS JUST KILLING TIME.
OH!
I DIDN'T KNOW THEY MADE SOUNDS LIKE THAT THESE DAYS!
OH!
THAT WAS JUST MY CELL PHONE!
I REMEMBER! WHEN THE GLASS BROKE AND I HEARD THAT "BEEEP" SOUND!
IT CAME FROM YOUR POCKET.
WHAT WAS IT?
... IF WE WERE DEALING WITH ANYONE BUT HINA-CHAN,
I THINK SHIRO'S COVER WOULD HAVE BEEN BLOWN LONG AGO.
WHAT A COINCIDENCE! IT REALLY SURPRISED ME.



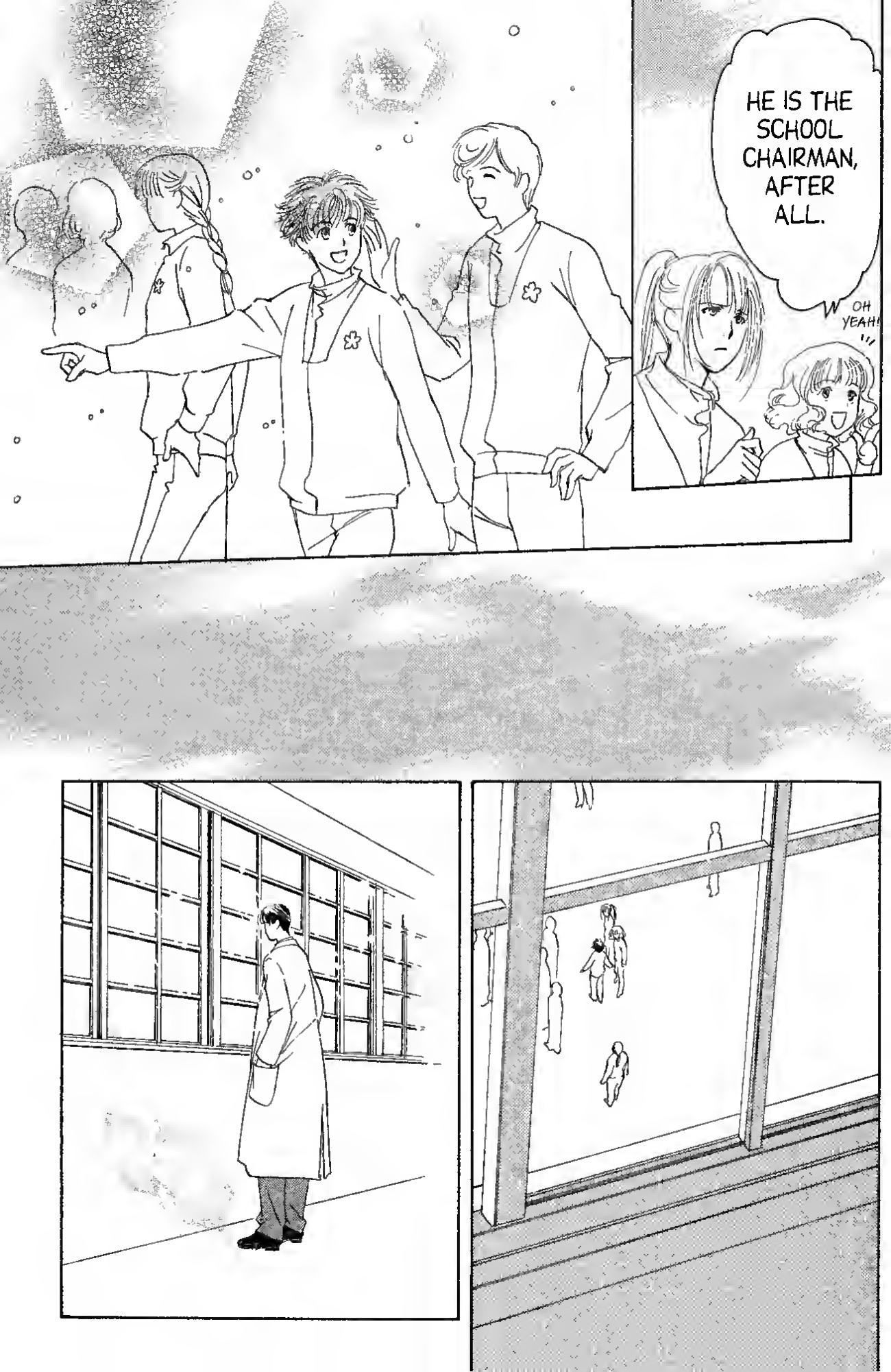

YOU DID IT! YOU MUST HAVE JUMPED AT LEAST YOUR OWN HEIGHT!
WOWWW.
THAT WAS GREAT, HINA!
WHOA, COOL!

OOPSIE-DAISY.


HEY, COME ON, THE REST OF YOU! HURRY UP AND JUMP!
YOU'RE LIKE A MON-KEY!
YOU'RE ALMOST TOO GOOD
HOW DO YOU DO IT, HINA?
IT'S AMAZING

IT'S GETTING CHILLY THESE DAYS,
BUT HINA'S JUST AS ENERGETIC AS EVER!
SO--
FIND ANYTHING OUT ABOUT ASOU-CHI?
WELL, I'VE SEARCHED ALL THE SCHOOL RECORDS
...BUT I COULDN'T FIND ANYTHING...
...ABOUT ASOU-SENSEI.

MAYBE WE SHOULD CALL THE BOARD OF EDUCATION?
DUNNO. NONE OF THE OTHER TEACHERS KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT HIM, EITHER...
WHAT DO YOU THINK THAT MEANS?
...AS *HIM*.
...YEAH. MAYBE WE SHOULD.
HINA'S...
...FATHER.
WHO?


HE IS THE SCHOOL CHAIRMAN, AFTER ALL.
OH YEAH!!!

...I JUST FEEL SO...AT EASE...WHEN YOU'RE WITH ME, ASOU-SAN.
ASOU-SAN...

YOU'RE SO MUCH LIKE HER....
...HINATA ASAHI.
I KNOW I'LL BE SAFE WITH YOU, ASOU-SAN.
YOU'LL PROTECT ME, WON'T YOU, ASOU-SAN?
...I LOVE YOU...
...ASOU-SAN...
I LOVE YOU...
...SENSEI!

LOOK OUT!
ASOU-SAN!!
I DON'T EVER WANT TO GO THROUGH THAT AGAIN.
YOU HAVE NOTHING TO GAIN BY LOVING SOMEONE LIKE ME.

ASOU-SAN...
...I'M JUST GLAD YOU'RE ALL RIGHT.

...SENSEI?

AND IF WE SHOULD CROSS A KANGAROO'S PATH, WE MIGHT GET PULLED INTO A BIG BOXING MATCH BUT I WON'T BE 'FRAID. 'CUZ I'VE GOT SENSEI!
I'M WALKING BACK HOME WITH SENSEI TODAY EVEN ON DARK STREETS, I KNOW I'LL BE OKAY!

DO YOU...
...KNOW WHAT I'M THINKING?

I WAS THINKING IT WOULD BE NICE IF WE COULD ALWAYS BE TOGETHER LIKE THIS, ASOU-SAN...
YOU LOOK SAD, SENSEI.
DID SOMETHING BAD HAPPEN?
DID SOMEONE DO SOMETHING BAD TO YOU, SENSEI?
THAT'S NOT TRUE! YOU'RE UNHAPPY! I CAN TELL!
...I'M NOT.

WHY WOULD YOU WORRY ABOUT THAT?
BECAUSE...
...BECAUSE I LOVE YOU, SENSEI.

I WORRY BECAUSE I LOVE YOU.
I DON'T WANT YOU TO EVER GET HURT...
...BECAUSE I LOVE YOU.

WHY?
...WHY WOULD YOU LOVE SOMEONE LIKE ME?

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, *WHY?*
I MEAN THE REASON.
*WHY* YOU'RE IN LOVE WITH ME.

WELL, YOU JUST HAPPENED TO MOVE IN NEXT DOOR TO ME.
AND YOU JUST HAPPENED TO BECOME MY HOMEROOM TEACHER.
AND EVEN THOUGH I'M JUST YOUR STUDENT ...YOU'VE TREATED ME SO NICELY!

YOU DO ALL THE THINGS I LOVE...
SENSEI.
THAT'S WHY I LOVE YOU.
ギュッ
...JUST HAPPENED, EH?

WHAT IS IT, SENSEI?
ARE YOU HURTING SOME-WHERE?
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

... YOU SAID I "JUST HAPPENED" TO DO ALL THOSE THINGS.
THAT I "JUST HAPPENED" TO MOVE IN NEXT DOOR.
I "JUST HAPPENED" TO BECOME YOUR HOMEROOM TEACHER.
AND I "JUST HAPPENED" TO SAVE YOU WHENEVER YOU WERE IN TROUBLE...

...BUT WHAT IF NONE OF THOSE THINGS WERE COINCIDENCE?
HUH?

I'M SAYING, WHAT IF NONE OF THAT "JUST HAPPENED"?
WHAT IF I WEREN'T SIMPLY YOUR HOMEROOM TEACHER, OR YOUR NEIGHBOR?
WHAT WOULD YOU SAY THEN?

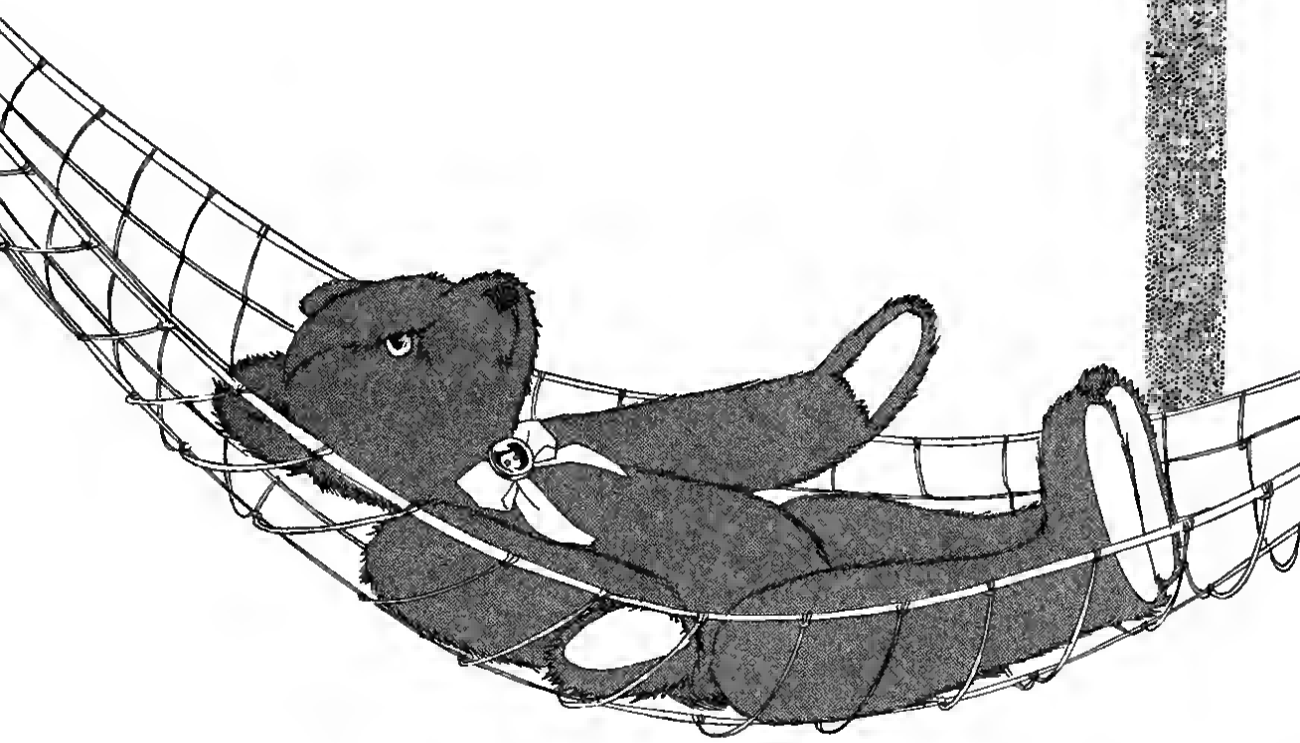
To Next

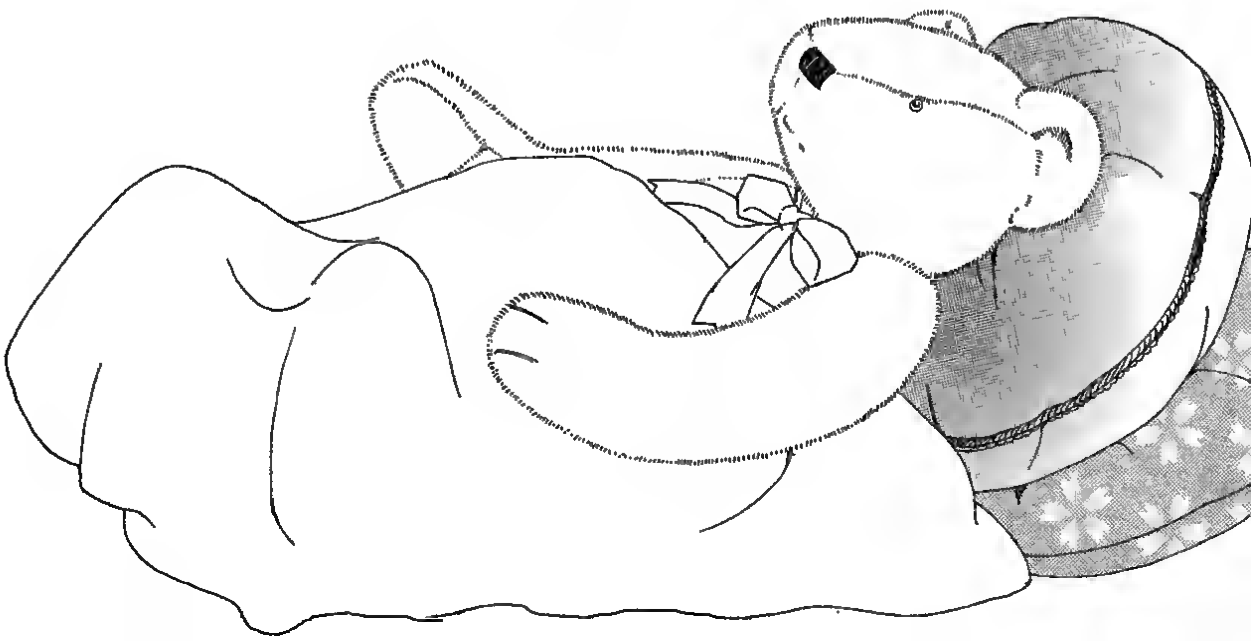
# SUKI™

12

I'M FALLING IN LOVE WITH YOU MORE AND MORE.
I'LL LOVE YOU ALWAYS, FOREVER AND EVER.

BUT THIS LOVE...WILL IT...





THAT WAS SCARY! IT CAME SO SUDDENLY...
IT'S COMING BACK?!
DAMN IT!

RUN!
WHY IS THAT CAR CHASING US?!
THEY MUST WANT SOMETHING!
FROM YOU?!
WHAT?! WHY WOULD IT BE ME?!

THEN ...IT'S *ME* THEY WANT.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!

IF THOSE PEOPLE IN THE CAR WANT SOMETHING FROM ME, THEN YOU SHOULDN'T BE INVOLVED, SENSEI.
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING...?!
DON'T WORRY. I'LL SEE YOU LATER, SENSEI!

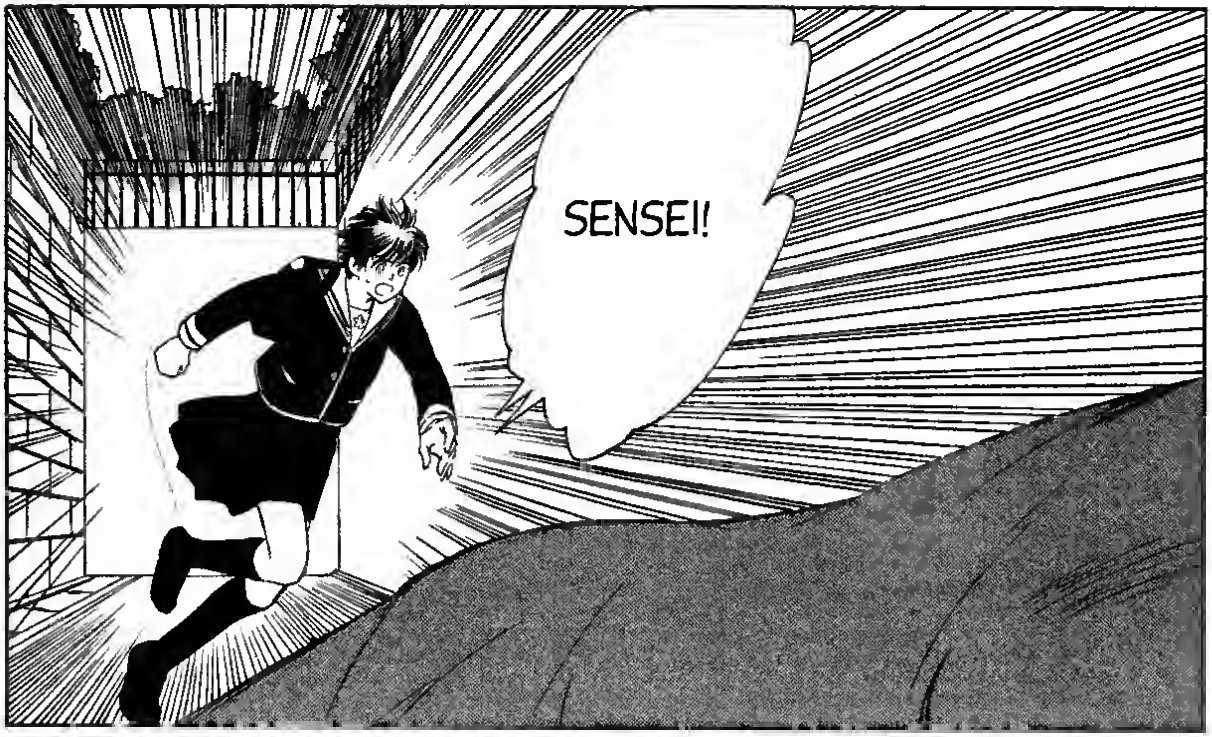
HOLD IT, HINA!
YOU IDIOT!
NO! YOU SHOULDN'T COME!
JUST-- WAIT!
NO! DON'T COME NEAR ME!

STOP RUNNING AWAY FROM ME!!
YOU SHOULDN'T BE HERE! YOU HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH THIS, SENSE!!

JUST --STAY BY MY SIDE!
ALL RIGHT?!
HINATA.
...OKAY.

EMI-CHAN!
KISHITANI--
IT'S DANGEROUS
HERE! GET
AWAY FROM
HERE, NOW!

KI...
SHI...
TANI...


SENSEI!

タン

DON'T WORRY.
HE'S JUST UNCONSCIOUS.

SENSEI-- WHAT HAPPENED?!

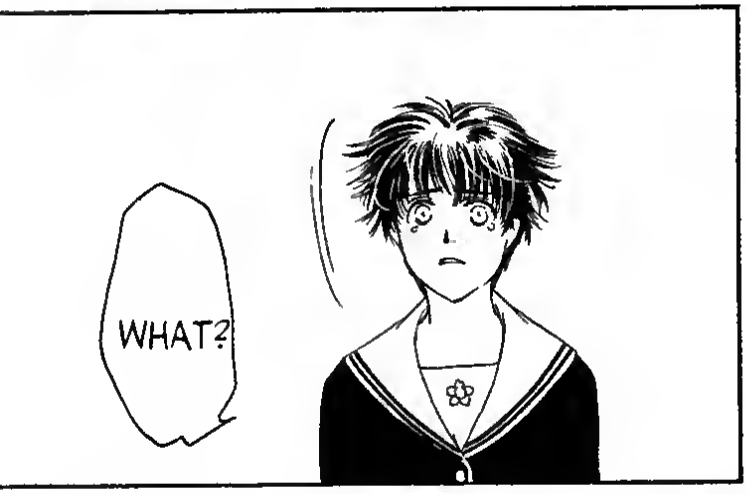
EMI... CHAN?
WILL YOU JUST COME WITH ME, HINA?

...
GUESS HINA-CHAN ISN'T GOING TO DROP BY TODAY.
I'VE STARTED EXPECTING HER OUT OF HABIT.
WELCOME.
カラン
カラン

DID SOMETHING HAPPEN?
ASOU AND ASAHI-SAN HAVE DISAPPEARED.

OW...!
SENSEI!
OH, I'M SO GLAD...
...I KEPT CALLING OUT TO YOU, SENSEI, BUT YOU WOULDN'T WAKE UP!
THAT STUN GUN'S BEEN MODIFIED...
ITS VOLTAGE IS MUCH HIGHER...
...THAN IN STORE-BOUGHT MODELS.

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!
YEAH...
YEAH...
...YOU HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH THIS, SENSEI.

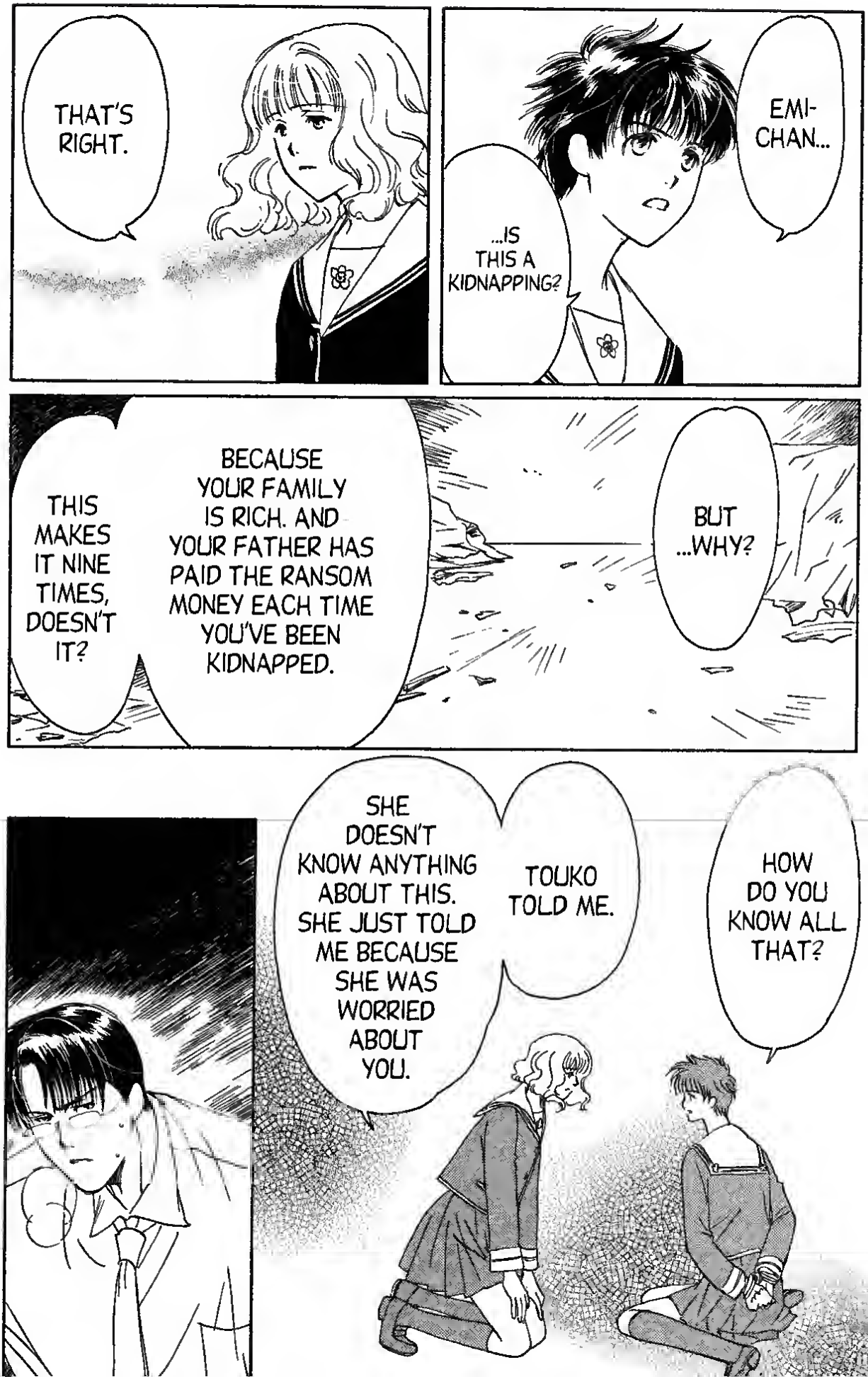

WHAT?

...NO. I *DO* HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH THIS.

EVEN THOUGH I WAS ASSIGNED TO YOU...
*THIS* HAD TO HAPPEN.

YOU HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH THIS KIDNAPPING!
IT'S NOT PATHETIC, SENSE!! YOU'RE JUST A TEACHER!
IT'S PATHETIC...
.....
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
I...
...HAVE PLENTY TO DO WITH IT.

PLEASE, JUST BEAR WITH IT A LITTLE LONGER.
YOUR FATHER WILL BE PAYING THE RANSOM MONEY SOON ENOUGH.
I'M SORRY, HINA...YOUR HANDS MUST HURT.


EMI-CHAN...
...IS THIS A KIDNAPPING?
THAT'S RIGHT.
BUT ...WHY?
BECAUSE YOUR FAMILY IS RICH. AND YOUR FATHER HAS PAID THE RANSOM MONEY EACH TIME YOU'VE BEEN KIDNAPPED.
THIS MAKES IT NINE TIMES, DOESN'T IT?
HOW DO YOU KNOW ALL THAT?
TOUKO TOLD ME.
SHE DOESN'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THIS. SHE JUST TOLD ME BECAUSE SHE WAS WORRIED ABOUT YOU.

MY FATHER FAILED IN HIS BUSINESS.
TO PAY BACK OUR DEBTS.
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO USE IT FOR?
YES.
SO...YOU JUST WANT MONEY?
IT'S THE USUAL STORY. HE BORROWED FROM SOME UNSAVORY TYPES, AND NOW HE'S IN A BIG HOLE.
AND IT'S REALLY BAD NOW.
THE PEOPLE HE OWES WERE IN THAT CAR THAT WAS CHASING YOU.
...I SEE.

BUT ASOU-SENSEI HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THIS!

...YOU'RE ANGRY, AREN'T YOU, HINA.

I'M NOT ANGRY ABOUT YOU KIDNAPPING ME, EMI-CHAN.
I UNDERSTAND THAT YOU'RE HAVING SOME TOUGH TIMES.
BUT SENSEI HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THIS! AND YOU HURT HIM AND BROUGHT HIM HERE! THAT'S WHY I'M ANGRY!
YOU REALLY *DO* LOVE SENSEI, DON'T YOU, HINA.
YES.

HUH?
WELL, SENSEI *DOES* HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH THIS.
ISN'T THAT RIGHT, SENSEI?

To Next

13

# SUKI

I LOVE YOU VERY MUCH.
I REALLY DO.

BUT MY LOVE FOR YOU MUST REMAIN A SECRET.

...WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

SENSEI'S REAL JOB IS TO PROTECT YOU, HINA.
BECAUSE HE'S A SENSEI?
NO.
THE DEBT COLLECTORS DID A BACKGROUND CHECK ON HIM.
SENSEI USED TO BE WITH THE SECRET POLICE.

HE WAS HIRED BY YOUR FATHER TO PROTECT YOU, HINA.
A FREELANCE BODYGUARD.
THEN HE BECAME A FREELANCER.
HE WAS IN THEIR SECURITY UNIT, BUT HE QUIT.

ALL RIGHT, ALREADY! I'M COMING!
I PROMISE I WON'T HURT YOU, HINA. I KNOW YOU DON'T LIKE THIS, BUT PLEASE, JUST KEEP QUIET.
AND I KNOW YOU'RE A PROFESSIONAL, SENSEI. BUT SO ARE THOSE GUYS OUTSIDE THE DOOR. AND THEY CAN BE QUITE SADISTIC.
IF YOU TRY ANYTHING, HINATA MIGHT GET HURT... SO PLEASE... DON'T.

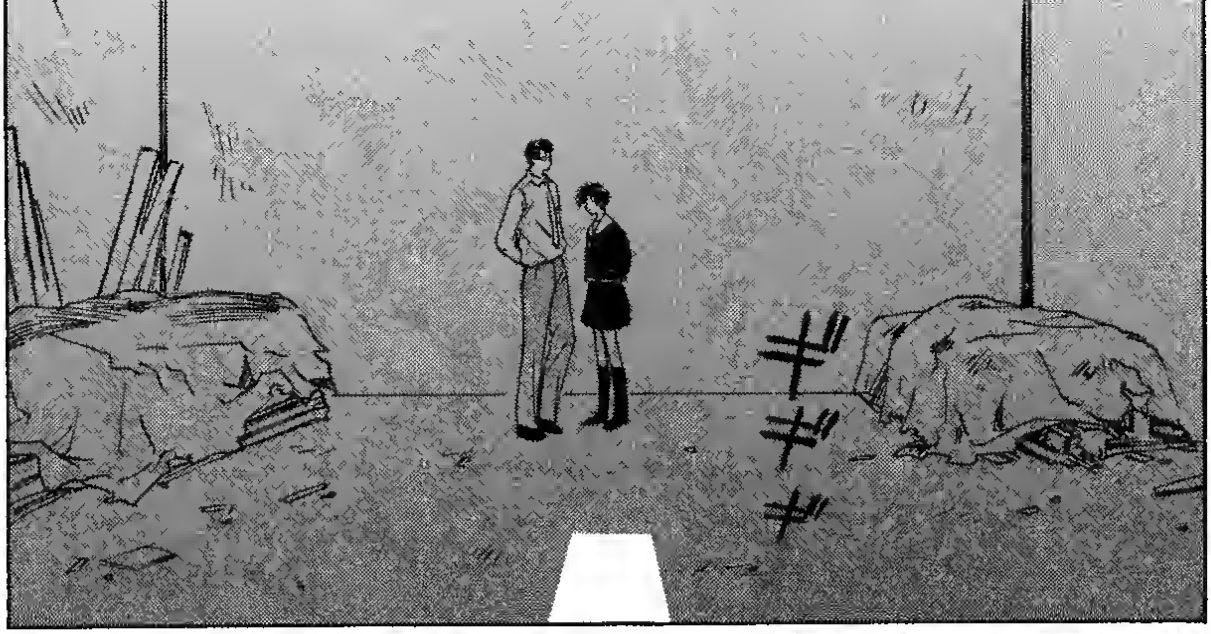
IN A WORD, YES.
...YOU'RE TELLING ME I CAN'T DO MY JOB?
JUST WAIT. I'LL BRING YOU SOMETHING TO EAT.
カタ
IS WHAT SHE SAID REALLY TRUE...?
.....

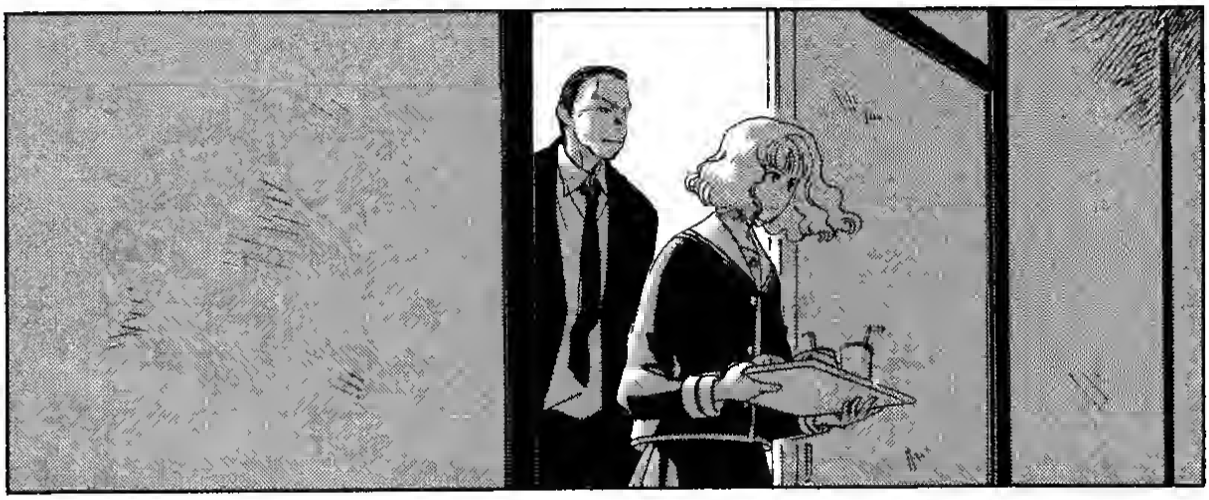
...THAT'S RIGHT.
I WAS HIRED BY YOUR FATHER.
THEN... WHEN YOU MOVED IN NEXT DOOR...

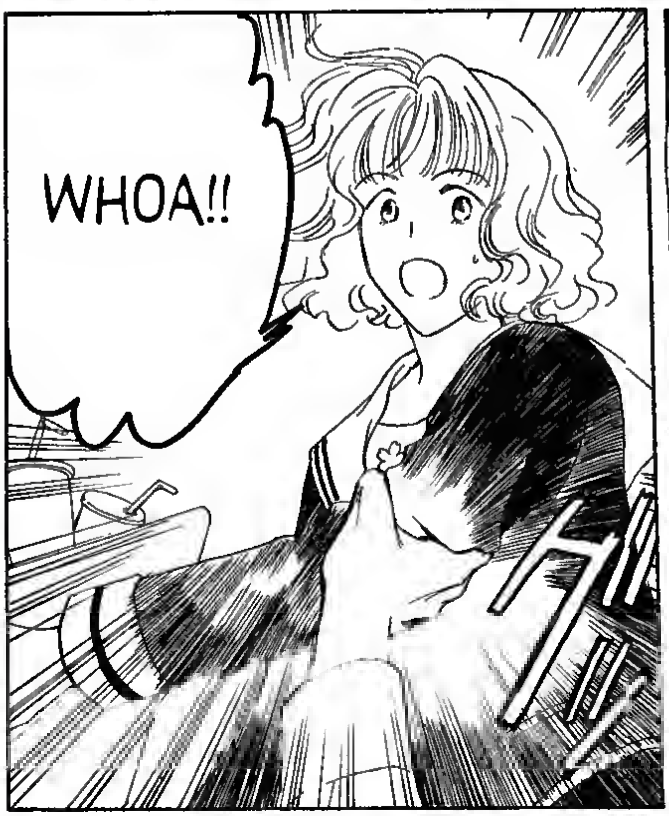
SINCE THE HOUSE NEXT DOOR WAS OPEN, YOUR FATHER MADE ARRANGEMENTS.
...AND WHEN YOU BECAME MY HOMEROOM TEACHER...
SAME THING. YOUR FATHER IS THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SCHOOL, AFTER ALL.
...BUT THEN...
THEN...

MOVE AWAY FROM ME.
WE'LL TALK LATER.

SENSEI...?!
DON'T LEAVE MY SIDE.





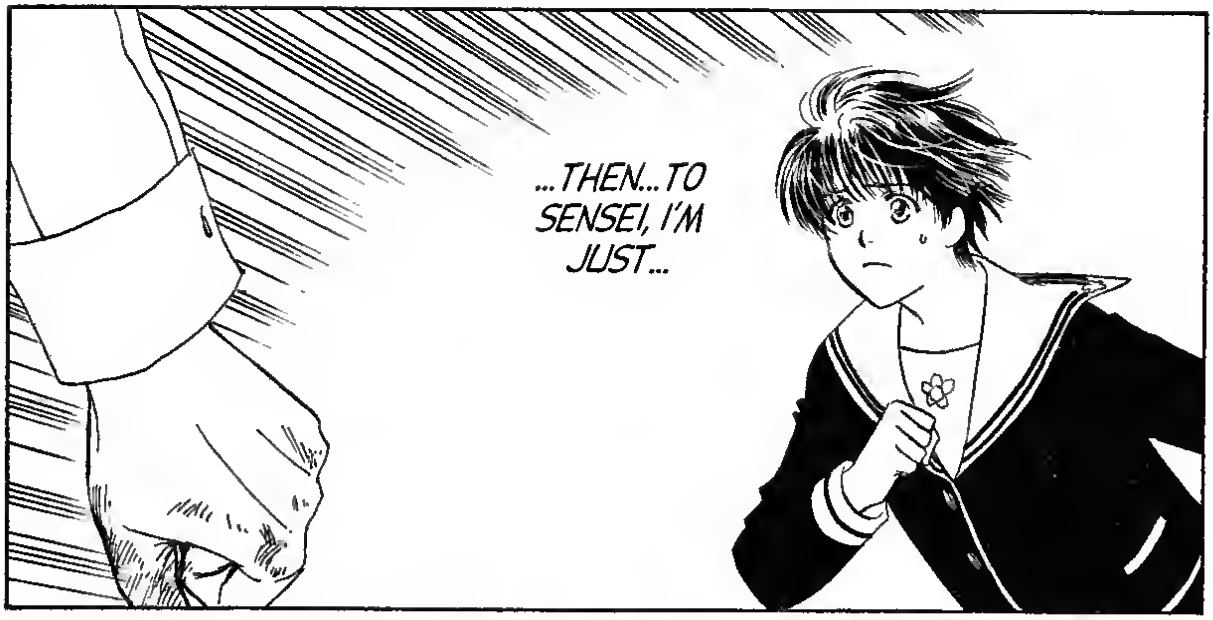

WHOA!!

I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND HAMBURGERS...

LATER! LET'S GO!!
HOW DID YOU UNTIE YOURSELF?!
SHUT UP AND COME WITH US!!
I CAN'T. I'M...
EMI-CHAN!

BUT
THEN...
THEN...

GREAT,
HE
FAINTED.

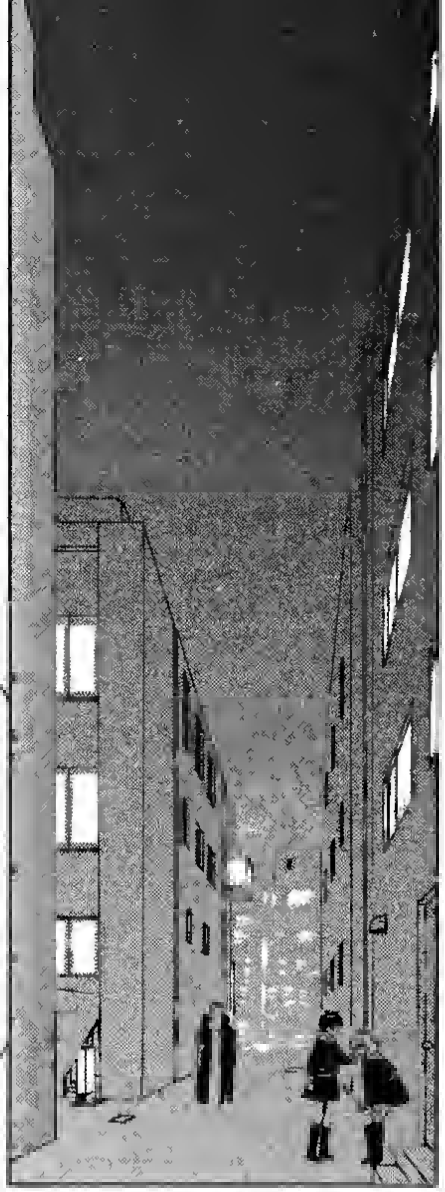

...THEN...TO SENSEI, I'M JUST...

...I'M JUST...

THERE'S THE EXIT!

WATCH OUT!!

...HOW DID YOU FIND US?



TOMOAKI-SAN SAID HE WAS WORRIED ABOUT ASAHI-SAN.

...NGHH!
WHAT IS IT?

AND I SUPPOSE YOU DON'T THINK I CAN HANDLE THINGS ON MY OWN...!

I BROKE MY THUMB.
IF YOU BREAK YOUR THUMB, THE SHAPE OF YOUR FINGERS CHANGES, SO IT'S EASY TO UNTIE YOUR HANDS.
...WHAT...?
WHEN YOU'RE TIED UP, IT'S THE QUICKEST WAY.

I JUST...
...NEVER WANT TO GO THROUGH THAT EXPERIENCE AGAIN.
...SO YOU REALLY DO WANT TO PROTECT ASAHI-SAN.
BUT THAT'S NOT THE ONLY REASON, IS IT?

...I WANT TO HEAR THE REST OF IT.

SO...
...SO...
...YOU JUST DID THOSE THINGS BECAUSE IT WAS YOUR JOB...?
...AND DOING ALL THE THINGS I LOVE...
...YOU JUST DID THOSE THINGS BECAUSE IT WAS YOUR JOB...?

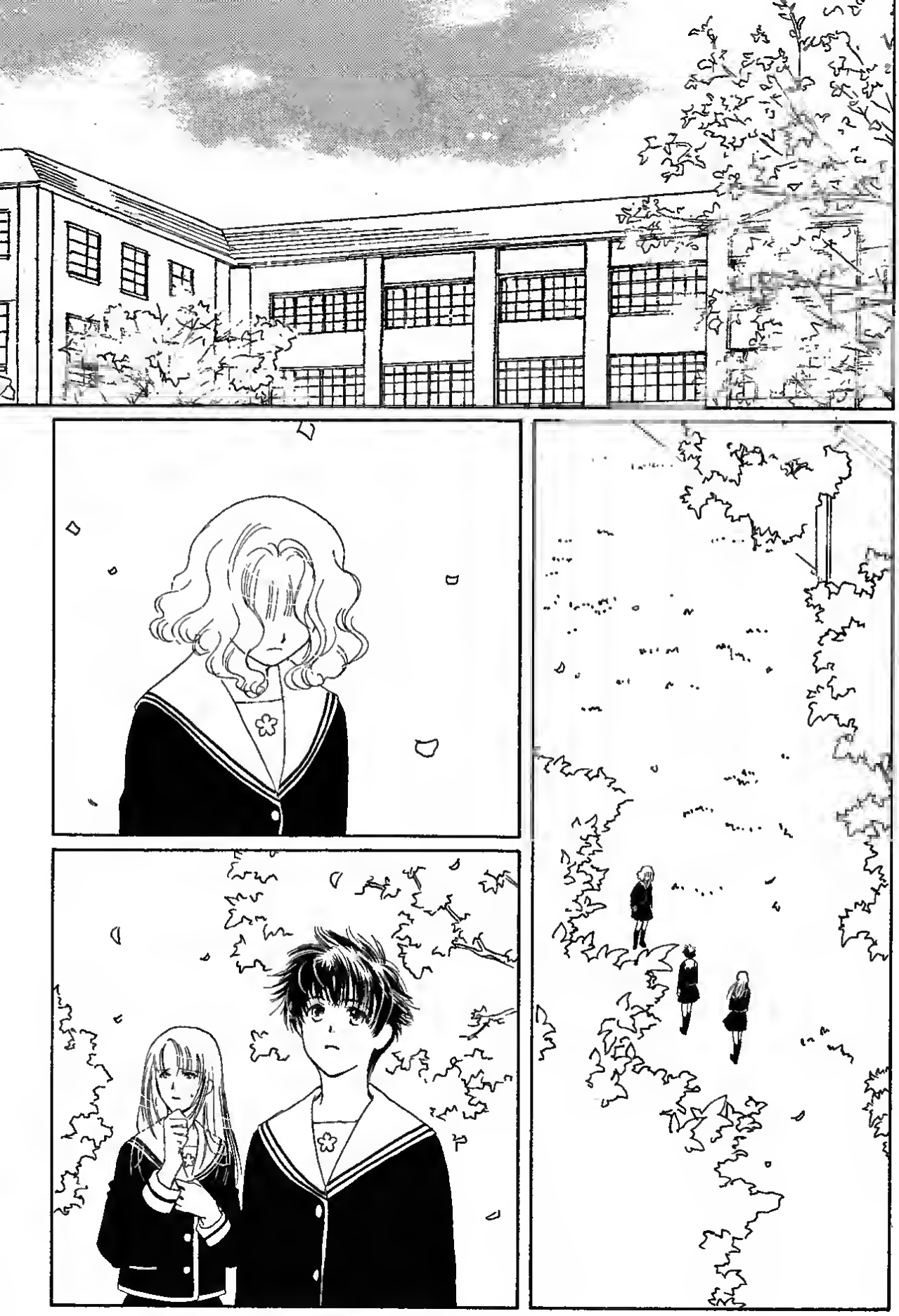
IS THAT WHY...?
ゲイッ
...I'M SORRY. I GUESS I JUST GOT CARRIED AWAY...
ハッ
THANK YOU FOR RESCUING ME.

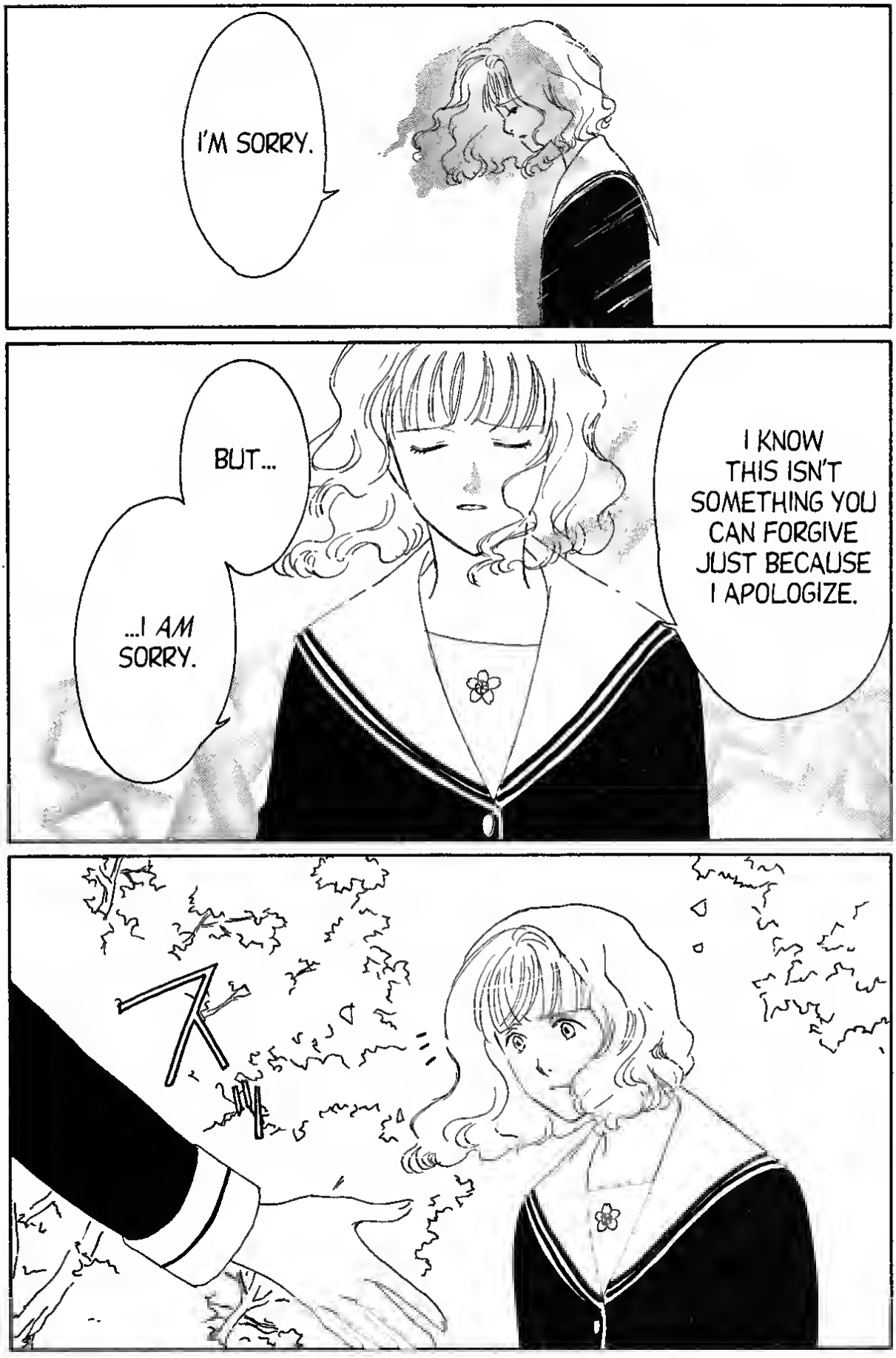
B-BUT ...HINA...
LET'S GO, EMI-CHAN.
To Next

14
SUKI
TM

I'VE COME TO UNDERSTAND MANY THINGS ABOUT LOVE.
LOVE MAKES ONE THINK ABOUT A GREAT MANY THINGS.

BUT THIS FEELING IS...




I'M SORRY.
I KNOW THIS ISN'T SOMETHING YOU CAN FORGIVE JUST BECAUSE I APOLOGIZE.
BUT...
...I AM SORRY.

...HUH?
LET'S SHAKE ON IT!
YOU APOLOGIZED, EMI-CHAN, SO LET'S JUST SHAKE AND MAKE UP.
MAKE UP...
...BUT HINA! AFTER I PUT YOU THROUGH ALL THAT...!

TOUKO TOLD ME ABOUT YOUR FATHER--
I'M THE ONE WHO DECIDED TO HAVE YOU KIDNAPPED!
AND I KNOW YOU'RE NOT GOING TO KIDNAP ME AGAIN, RIGHT?
AND YOU BROUGHT ME FOOD.
THOUGH I DIDN'T GET A CHANCE TO EAT IT.
YES, EMI-CHAN... BUT YOU PROMISED NOT TO HURT ME.
THEN IT'S SETTLED!
I WON'T.

LET'S BE FRIENDS AGAIN!
OH, HINA...
...YOU'RE SUCH A GOOD LITTLE GIRL!!

EMI-CHAN--I CAN'T BREATHE!
HEY, HEY--I CAN'T BREATHE, EMI-CHAN!
じたばた
パタパタ
YOU HAVE HOMEROOM DAY DUTY TODAY-- RIGHT, EMI-CHAN?
SHOULDN'T YOU GO SOON?

WELL, YOU CAN BE MY FRIEND FROM NOW ON TOO...
...EMI-CHAN!
I NEVER THOUGHT I COULD BE A REGULAR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT AFTER THIS.
...OKAY!
SEE YA IN CLASS!

WHY ARE *YOU* APOLOGIZING, TOUKO-CHAN?
I'M SORRY...
...SO I GOT TO BE FRIENDS WITH EMI-CHAN TOO!
BESIDES, YOU WERE FRIENDS WITH EMI-CHAN...
BECAUSE I TOLD EMI ABOUT YOUR FAMILY...
OH, THAT'S WHAT FRIENDS *DO*.

SO, I HEARD YOU ASKED YOUR FATHER...
...TO HELP EMI'S FAMILY WITH THEIR DEBTS.
...HINA...
DID YOU ALSO ASK HIM NOT TO CALL THE POLICE?
UH-HUH. I ASKED HIM TO LEND MONEY TO EMI-CHAN'S DAD.
AND...YOU KNOW ABOUT ASOU-SENSEI NOW TOO.
BOY, WAS HE MAD AT ME!
YUP!

ASOU-SENSEI TURNED OUT TO BE JUST A BODYGUARD HIRED BY MY FATHER.
YES.
I HEARD.

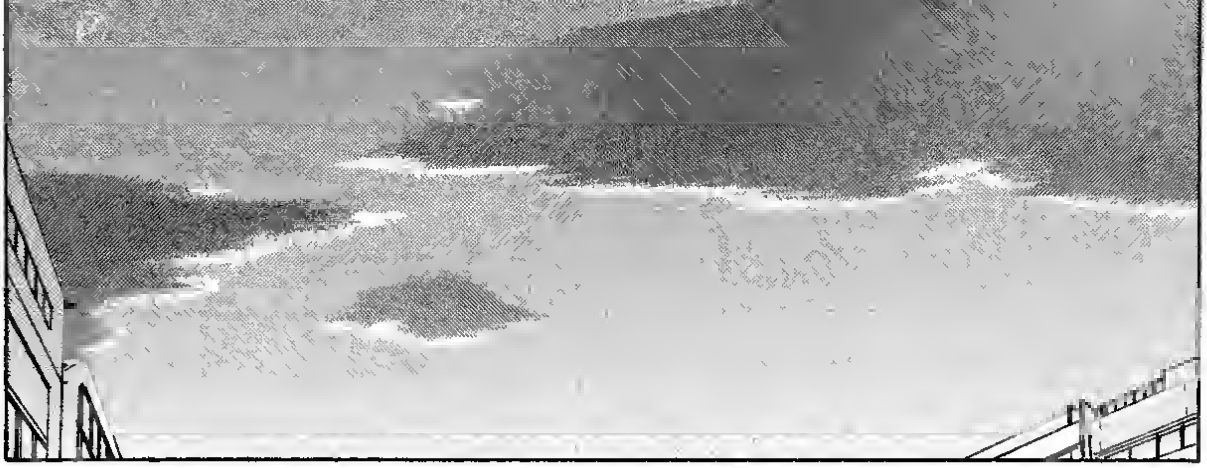
YEP. HE TOLD ME SO.
...THAT MUST HAVE BEEN YOUR FATHER!
THEN ...THAT MAN SPEAKING TO ASOU-SENSEI AT THE MUSEUM...
IT WAS ALL PART OF THE JOB...
...EVERYTHING SENSEI DID FOR ME.

WALKING HOME WITH ME...EATING WITH ME.
HOLDING HANDS WITH ME.
PROTECTING ME.
SHARING HIS UMBRELLA WITH ME.
...ALL OF IT.
ALL OF IT...

ALL THE THINGS I LOVE! ALL OF IT...
...WAS JUST PART OF HIS JOB.
...OH, HINA.

HEY, SENSEI'S COMING SOON.
YEAH, WE BETTER SIT DOWN.
1-D
HEY--IT'S SENSEI!
バタバタ
ASOU-SENSEI...

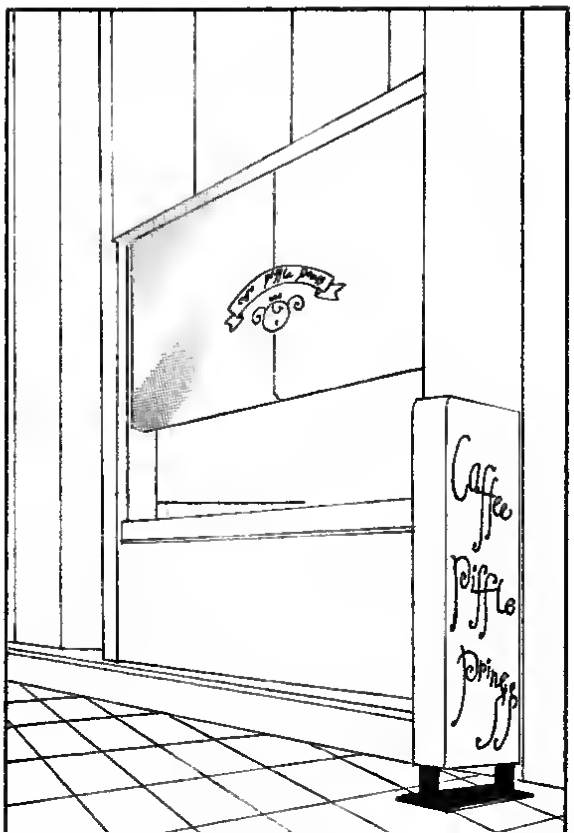
NICE TO SEE YOU AGAIN!
THEN SHE MUST HAVE HAD HER BABY!
IT'S MAEDA-SENSEI!
I'M SORRY I WAS AWAY FOR SO LONG.
BUT I'M BACK AGAIN, STARTING TODAY!
HEY SENSEI, DID YOU GAIN WEIGHT?
CAN WE SEE YOUR BABY?
.....
ASOU-SENSEI...



NOT ONLY DID MY HOMEROOM TEACHER CHANGE...MY CHEMISTRY TEACHER WAS DIFFERENT TOO.
I WONDER IF SENSEI QUIT?

HINA-CHAN?

TOMO-KUN!

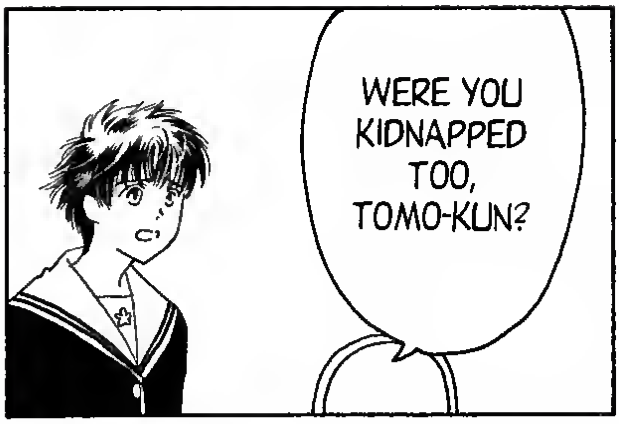


...YES.
THAT SENSEI WAS WITH ME JUST BECAUSE OF HIS JOB.
YOU KNEW ABOUT HIM, DIDN'T YOU, TOMO-KUN?
...YES.
DID SENSEI TELL YOU TO NOT TALK TO ME ABOUT IT?

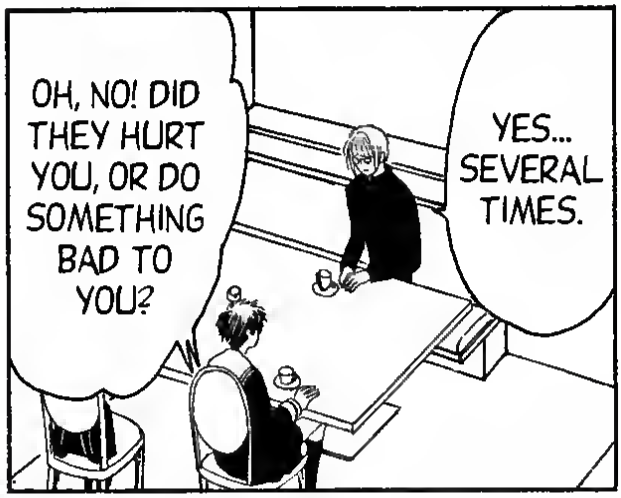
NO
NO
IT'S OKAY.
YOU'RE SENSEI'S FRIEND, TOMO-KUN. YOU COULDN'T BREAK YOUR PROMISE!
I'M SORRY. IN THE END, I WAS JUST DECEIVING YOU, HINA-CHAN.
HE DID RESCUE ME THAT ONE TIME, BUT I RAN OFF BEFORE I GOT A CHANCE TO THANK HIM PROPERLY!
OH! I SHOULD THANK KIZU-SAN TOO.

KIZU IS A BODYGUARD TOO...FOR ME.
HUH?
WELL ...THAT'S KIZU'S JOB.
SO KIZU-SAN WORKED FOR THE SECRET POLICE, TOO?
YOU SEE, KIZU AND SHIRO ARE FORMER COLLEAGUES.
YES, ON SECURITY DETAIL...AND NOW...

...SINCE HE QUIT, HE'S WORKED AS MY PERSONAL BODYGUARD.
TOMO-KUN-- ARE YOU IN DANGER?!
WHAT?! IS SOMEONE AFTER YOU?
IS THERE ANYTHING I CAN DO?!
IT'S A LONG STORY.


WERE YOU KIDNAPPED TOO, TOMO-KUN?

THE REASON I NEED PROTECTION IS RATHER SIMILAR TO YOURS, HINA-CHAN.
THANKS FOR YOUR CONCERN, THOUGH.

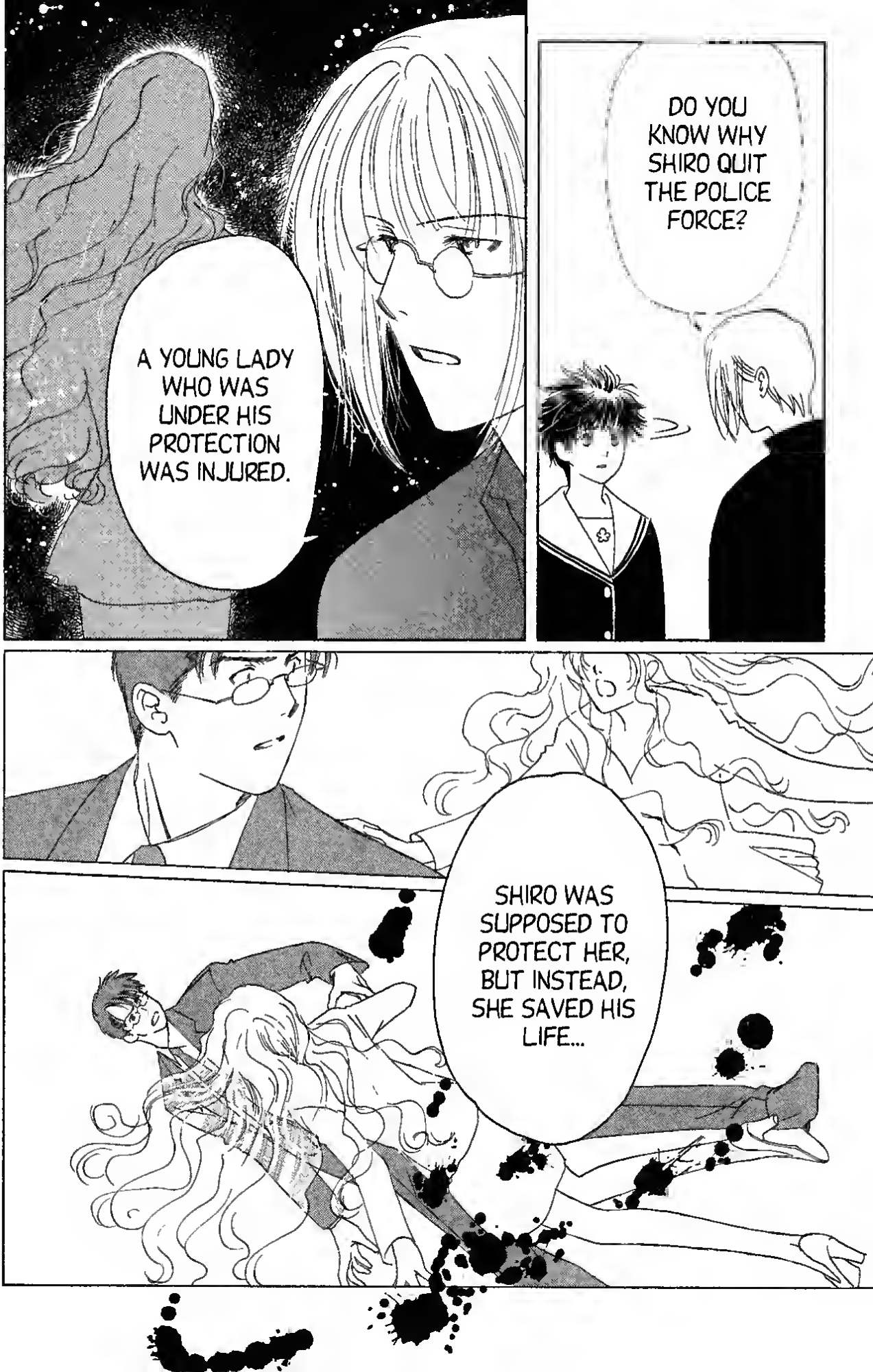

OH, NO! DID THEY HURT YOU, OR DO SOMETHING BAD TO YOU?
YES... SEVERAL TIMES.

THEY DID?
IT'S ALL IN THE PAST NOW.

YOU WEREN'T EVER HARMED, WERE YOU, HINA-CHAN?
NO. EVERYONE WAS SO NICE TO ME.
ALL NINE TIMES.
NO...THE TENTH TIME TOO.

BUT SENSEI RESCUED ME BECAUSE IT WAS HIS JOB.
...HUH?
OF COURSE SHIRO'S JOB IS TO PROTECT YOU, HINA-CHAN.
BUT I DON'T THINK HE WOULD HAVE GONE AS FAR AS HE DID FOR YOU JUST BECAUSE OF A JOB.

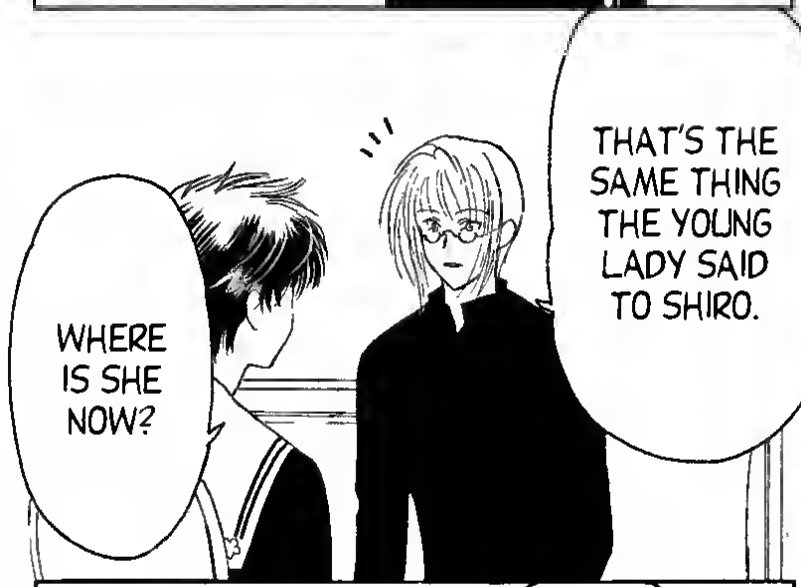
HINA-CHAN. YOU ONCE SAID YOU WANTED TO KNOW MORE ABOUT SHIRO.
DO YOU STILL FEEL THAT WAY?

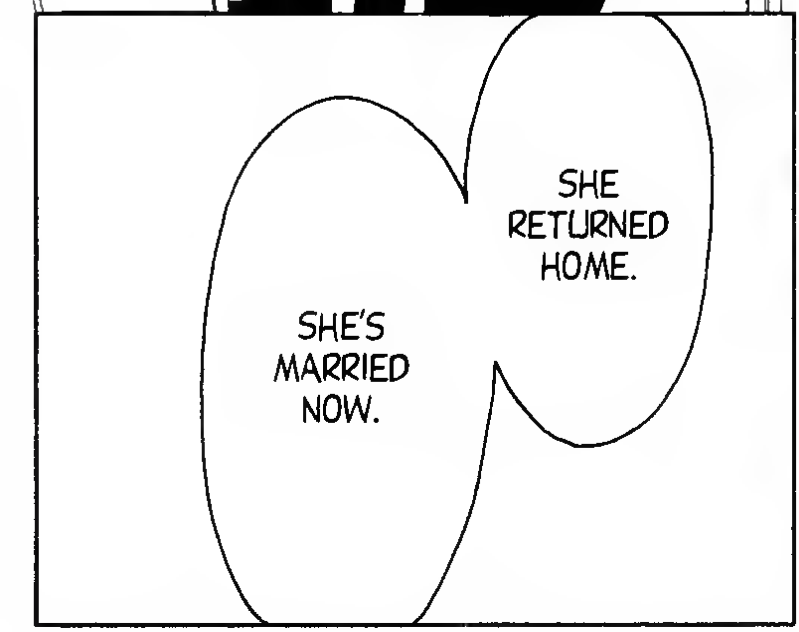

A YOUNG LADY WHO WAS UNDER HIS PROTECTION WAS INJURED.
DO YOU KNOW WHY SHIRO QUIT THE POLICE FORCE?
SHIRO WAS SUPPOSED TO PROTECT HER, BUT INSTEAD, SHE SAVED HIS LIFE...

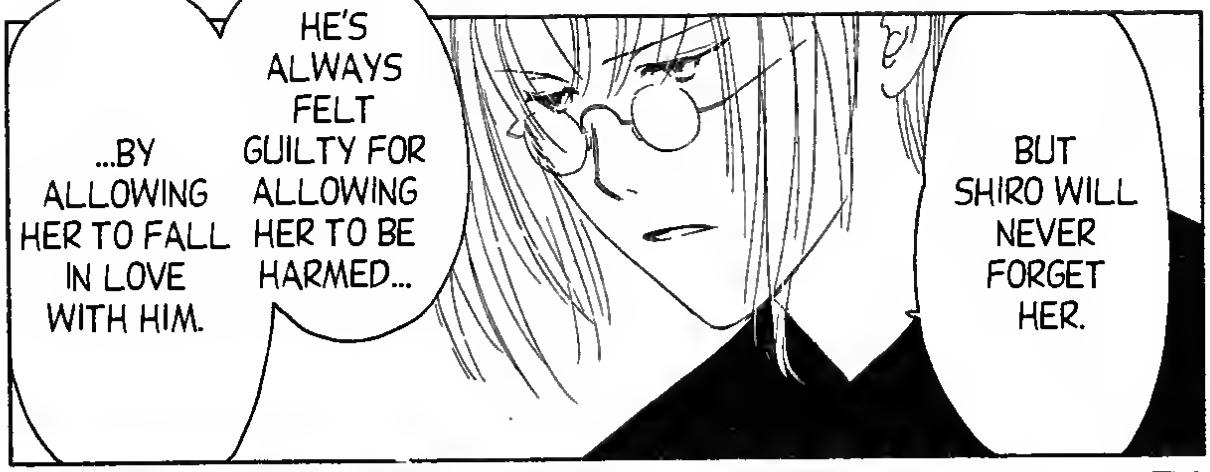
BY THROWING HERSELF IN FRONT OF SHIRO, THE YOUNG LADY TOOK A BULLET MEANT FOR *HIM*.
SHE SURVIVED, BUT SHE SUFFERED A WOUND ON HER LEG THAT WILL NEVER DISAPPEAR.
WHY DID SHE DO THAT...
...FOR SENSEI...?
BECAUSE SHE FELL IN LOVE WITH HIM.

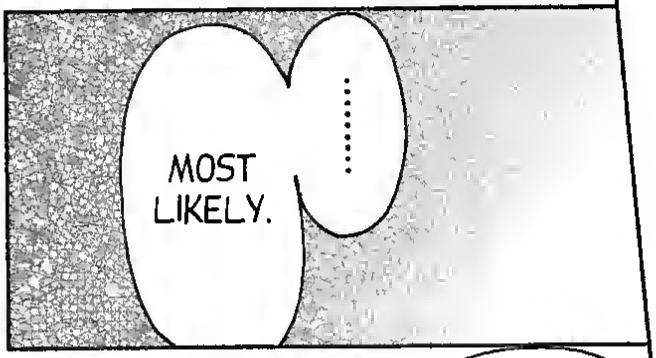
...I UNDER-STAND.
NOBODY WANTS THE PERSON THEY LOVE TO BE HURT.

EVEN THOUGH SHE WAS A DIPLOMATIC GUEST, AND WAS DUE TO RETURN TO HER COUNTRY.

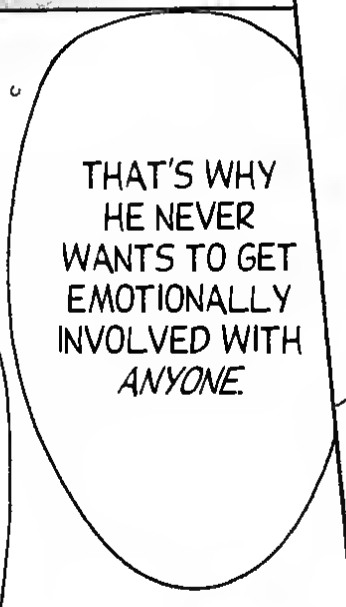

THAT'S THE SAME THING THE YOUNG LADY SAID TO SHIRO.
WHERE IS SHE NOW?


SHE RETURNED HOME.
SHE'S MARRIED NOW.


BUT SHIRO WILL NEVER FORGET HER.
HE'S ALWAYS FELT GUILTY FOR ALLOWING HER TO BE HARMED...
...BY ALLOWING HER TO FALL IN LOVE WITH HIM.


.....
MOST LIKELY.

DID SENSEI...
...LOVE HER BACK?


THAT'S WHY HE NEVER WANTS TO GET EMOTIONALLY INVOLVED WITH *ANYONE*.

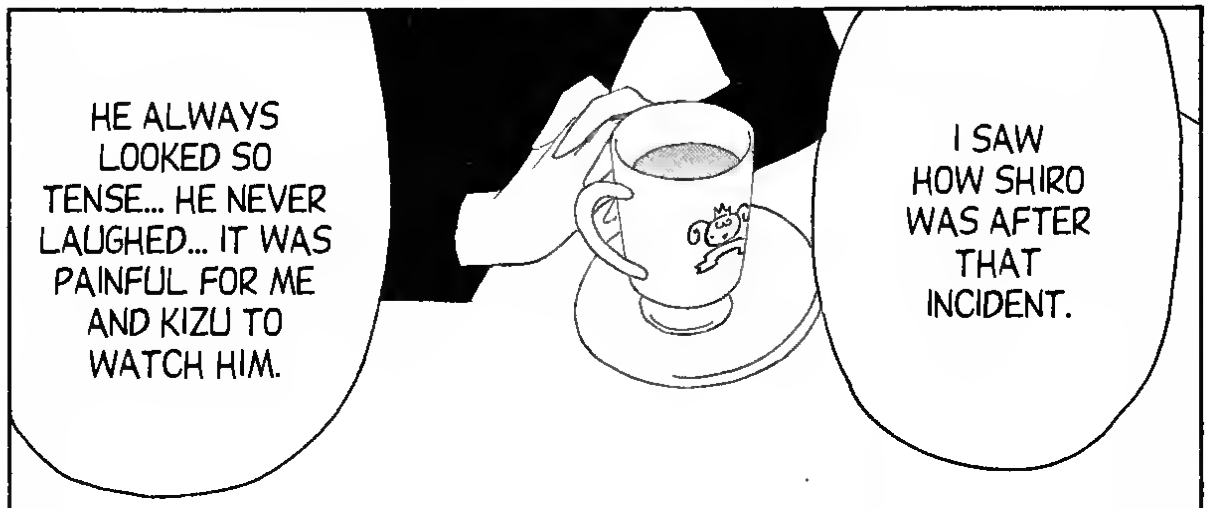
I THINK HE'S AFRAID OF FALLING IN LOVE, OR HAVING SOMEONE LOVE HIM.

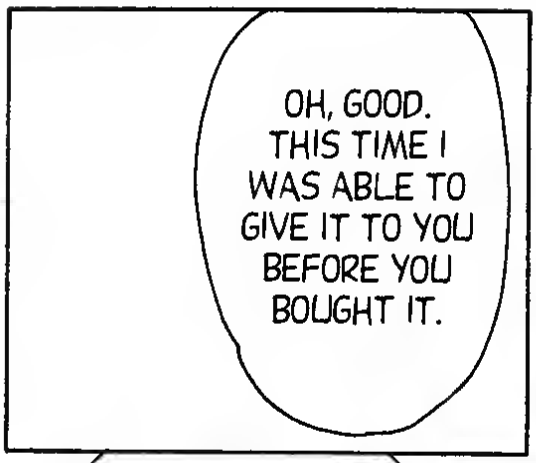
BUT IT'S IMPOSSIBLE...
...NOT TO LOVE ANYONE.

I APOLOGIZE...
...FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART...FOR LYING TO YOU ALL THIS TIME.
SENSEI...

SHIRO THINKS HE CAN NEVER FALL IN LOVE AGAIN, BUT MAYBE YOU COULD CHANGE THAT PART OF HIM.
ME...?
BUT I ALWAYS BELIEVED THAT YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO CHANGE SHIRO, HINA-CHAN.

...I WAS JUST ANOTHER JOB.
BUT TO SENSEI...


HE ALWAYS LOOKED SO TENSE... HE NEVER LAUGHED... IT WAS PAINFUL FOR ME AND KIZU TO WATCH HIM.
I SAW HOW SHIRO WAS AFTER THAT INCIDENT.



I HOPE...THINGS CAN HAPPEN IN THE REAL WORLD...THE WAY THEY DO IN THIS BOOK.

# SUKI 3

Words and Pictures by Tomo

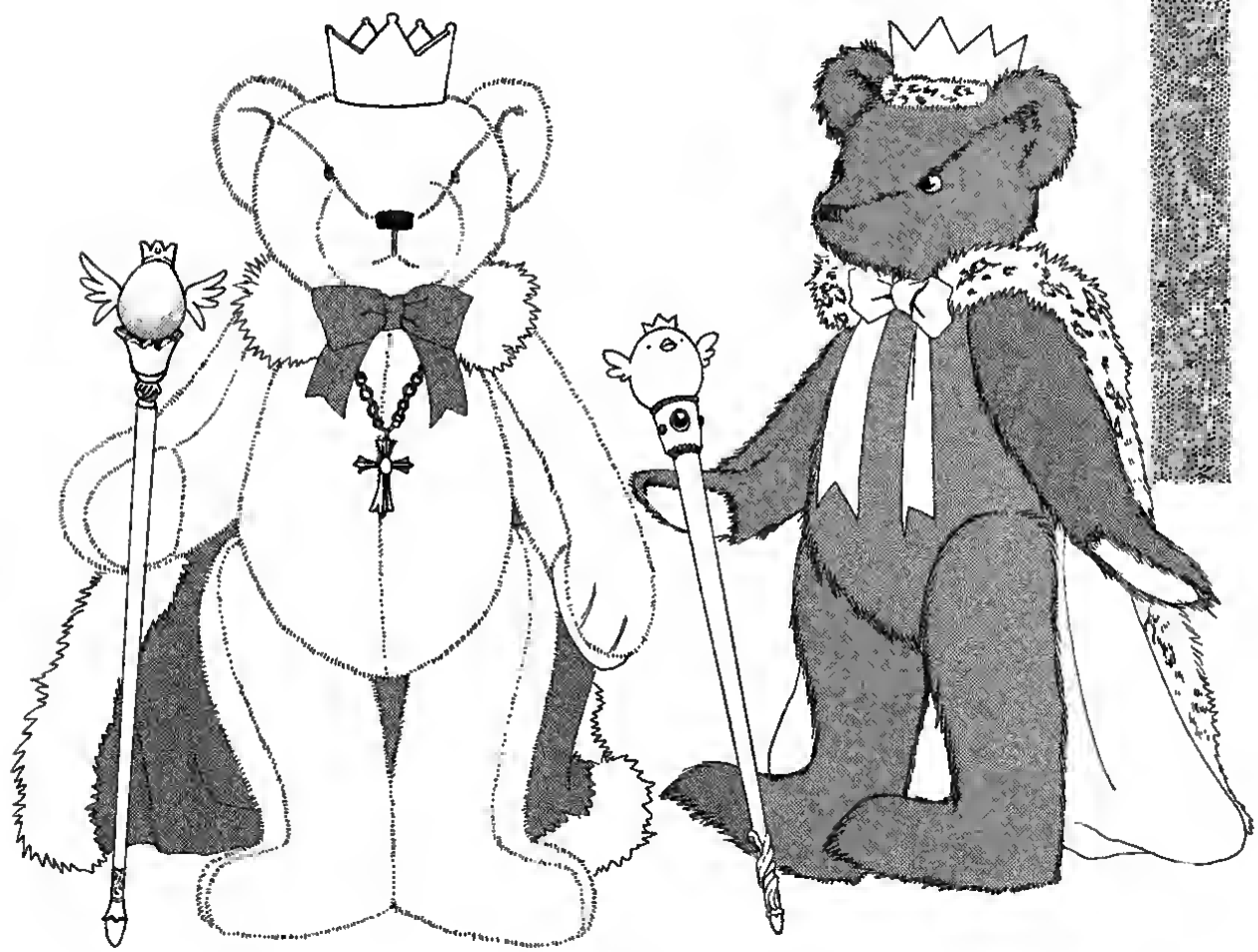
IF YOU HAVE THE TIME...PLEASE READ IT.

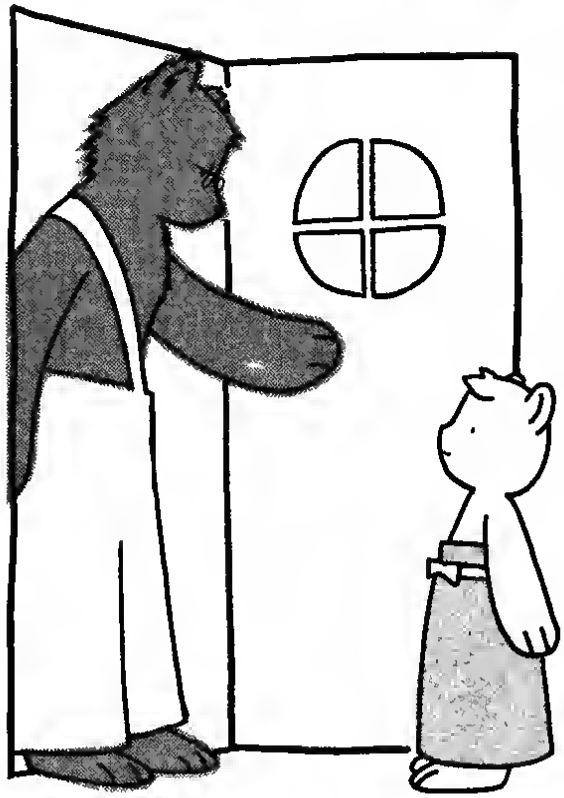
To Next

15

SUKI™

SUKI. (I LOVE YOU.)
DAKARA SUKI. (THAT'S WHY I LOVE YOU.)





AND SO THE LITTLE BEAR VISITED KUMA-SAN'S HOUSE AGAIN.

SHE KNOCKED ON THE DOOR.

KUMA-SAN, AS USUAL, WOULD NOT LET HER INSIDE. BUT THESE DAYS HE WOULD AT LEAST COME OUT AND ALLOW HER TO PEEK IN.



*Kuma is the Japanese word for bear.

WHEN HE WAS NOT TOO BUSY, HE WOULD COME OUT TO THE YARD, AND ALTHOUGH IT WOULD ONLY BE FOR A SHORT WHILE, HE WOULD CHAT WITH THE LITTLE BEAR.

USUALLY, IT WAS THE LITTLE BEAR WHO DID ALL THE TALKING, BUT SHE WAS JUST HAPPY TO SPEND TIME WITH KUMA-SAN.

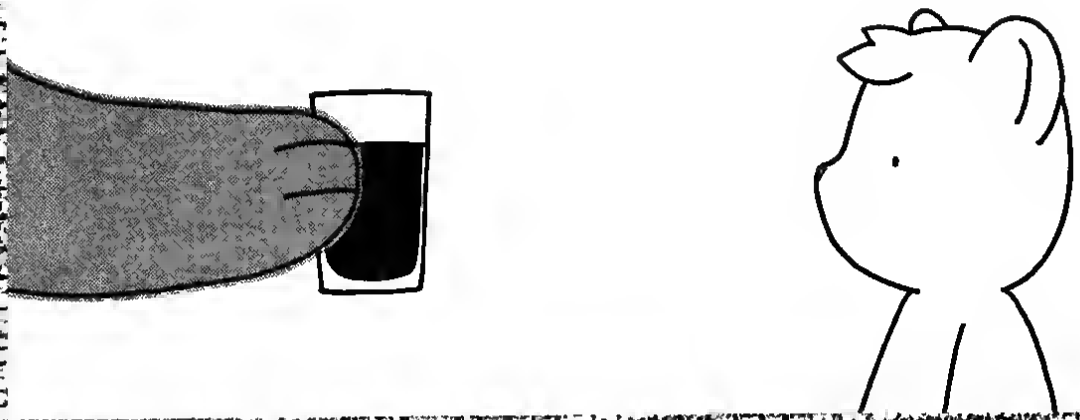
SHE WOULD TALK ABOUT ALL SORTS OF THINGS. ABOUT THE DREAM SHE HAD LAST NIGHT. THE THINGS SHE DID THIS MORNING. HOW THE HONEY SHE ATE FOR LUNCH TASTED.

AND WHEN SHE TALKED, IT MADE THE LITTLE BEAR VERY HAPPY TO KNOW THAT KUMA-SAN WAS LISTENING INTENTLY. AND SO SHE TALKED EVEN MORE.

3

AFTER TALKING FOR A VERY LONG TIME, THE LITTLE BEAR BECAME VERY THIRSTY.
THE LITTLE BEAR THOUGHT TO HERSELF, "I WISH I COULD DRINK SOMETHING. MAYBE I WILL DRINK SOME MILK WHEN I GET HOME." AND AT THAT VERY MOMENT, SHE SAW A CUP THRUST OUT IN FRONT OF HER.

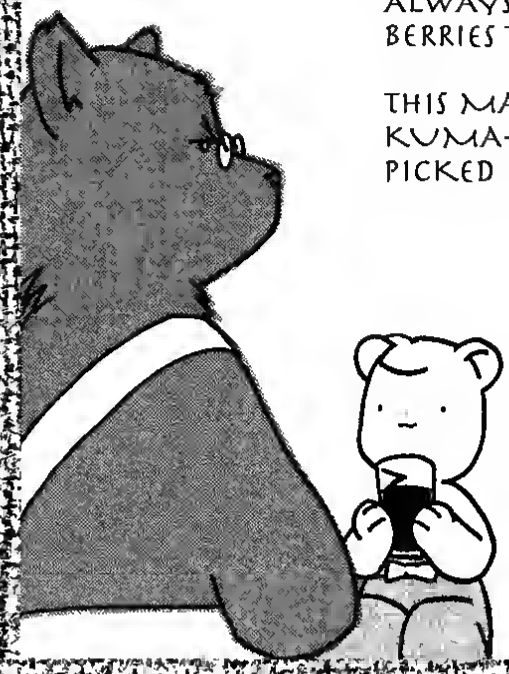
IT WAS KUMA-SAN, OFFERING HER A DRINK.



4

THE LITTLE BEAR WAS VERY SURPRISED.
"UM, WHAT'S THIS?" SHE ASKED.
"IF YOU DON'T WANT IT, THAT'S FINE," SAID KUMA-SAN.
HE BEGAN TO TAKE AWAY THE CUP.
THE LITTLE BEAR THOUGHT TO HERSELF. KUMA-SAN HAD SAID THAT IF SHE DIDN'T WANT IT, THAT WOULD BE FINE. WHICH MUST HAVE MEANT THAT HE HAD OFFERED THE CUP FOR HER TO DRINK.
SO SHE SAID VERY QUICKLY, "NO, PLEASE, I'LL DRINK IT. DON'T TAKE IT AWAY."

AND THE LITTLE BEAR TOOK THE CUP FROM KUMA-SAN'S PAW. INSIDE WAS JUICE MADE FROM BERRIES.



THE LITTLE BEAR ASKED KUMA-SAN, "WHERE DID YOU FIND THESE BERRIES...?" KUMA-SAN GAVE HER A GRUFF LOOK, AS HE ALWAYS DID, BUT HE ANSWERED, "I USED THE BERRIES THAT YOU PICKED."

THIS MADE THE LITTLE BEAR EVEN HAPPIER. KUMA-SAN HAD USED THE BERRIES SHE HAD PICKED FOR HIM!

"THANK YOU VERY MUCH," THE LITTLE BEAR SAID WITH A SMILE. "WHY ARE YOU THANKING ME?" KUMA-SAN ANSWERED WITH A SCOWL.
BUT THE LITTLE BEAR REALIZED THERE WAS NO ANGER IN KUMA-SAN'S EYES. IN FACT, WHEN SHE LOOKED CLOSER, HE ALMOST LOOKED A LITTLE BASHFUL.

"KUMA-SAN IS A VERY NICE BEAR," THE LITTLE BEAR THOUGHT TO HERSELF AS SHE DRANK. "JUST AS I HAD THOUGHT FROM THE START."
THE JUICE WAS VERY GOOD AND SWEET.

AND THE LITTLE BEAR WAS EVEN HAPPIER THAN SHE HAD BEEN BEFORE.

7 ONE DAY, THE LITTLE BEAR BROUGHT A BASKETFUL OF APPLES SHE HAD PICKED IN THE FOREST, IN HOPES OF SHARING THEM WITH KUMA-SAN. BUT WHEN SHE ARRIVED AT HOME, SHE SAW SEVERAL BEARS GATHERED THERE.

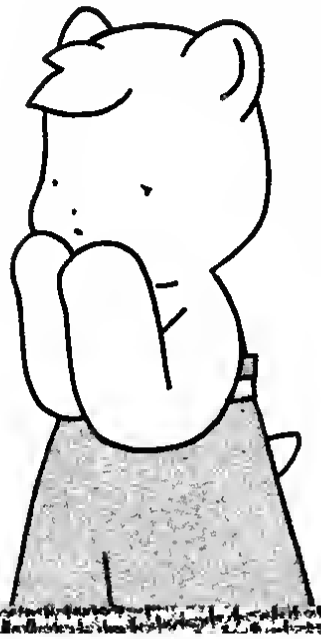
"DID SOMETHING HAPPEN?" SHE ASKED. ONE OF THE BEARS ANSWERED, VERY EMPHATICALLY, "THERE'S BEEN A BURGLARY!"

THE LITTLE BEAR WAS VERY SURPRISED. SHE RUSHED INTO HER HOME. THE WINDOWS WERE BROKEN, HER BELONGINGS HAD BEEN TOSSED AROUND AND EVERY ROOM WAS A MESS.

8 ANOTHER BEAR ASKED HER, "WAS ANYTHING STOLEN?"

SHE REPLIED, "THE BERRIES I LEFT IN THE KITCHEN ARE GONE."

SHE MEANT THE BERRIES SHE HAD PICKED IN THE WOODS, WHEN KUMA-SAN HAD RESCUED HER FROM THE CROWS. THE LITTLE BEAR WAS SO HAPPY KUMA-SAN HAD SAVED HER THAT SHE WAS DRYING THE BERRIES AS A MEMENTO.



THE LITTLE BEAR BECAME VERY SAD.

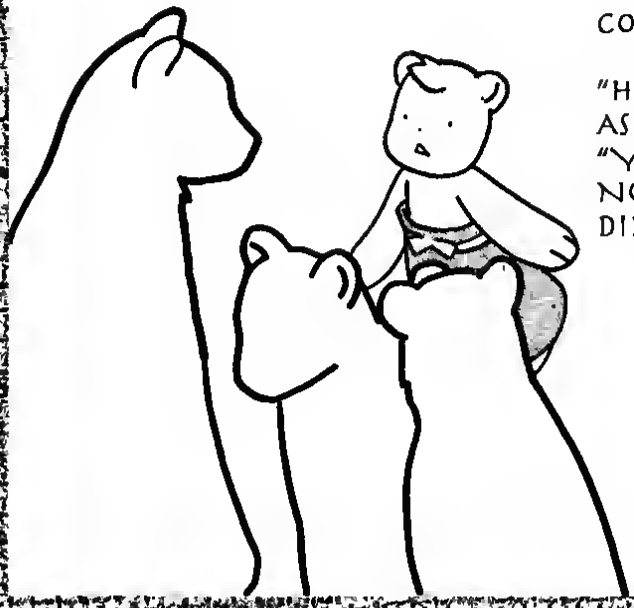
"I WAS SAVING THOSE BERRIES," SHE THOUGHT.
"THOSE BERRIES REMINDED ME OF WHEN KUMA-SAN CAME TO SAVE ME.
AND KUMA-SAN USED SOME OF THEM TO MAKE JUICE FOR ME."

AS THE LITTLE BEAR THOUGHT SADLY TO HERSELF, THE OTHER BEARS GATHERED BEHIND HER AND BEGAN TO TALK.

"I WONDER, WHO DID IT?"
"WHO BROKE IN TO HER HOUSE?"
AND THEN SOMEONE SAID,
"I'LL BET *HE* DID IT."

THEY ALL BEGAN TO CHIME IN, "THAT'S RIGHT.
HE PROBABLY DID."
"HE WAS AN OUTSIDER TO BEGIN WITH."
"I HEARD HE DID SOME BAD THINGS IN HIS LAST TOWN TOO."
"I ALWAYS HAD A FEELING HE WOULD DO SOMETHING LIKE THIS."
"IT'S HIM. I KNOW IT."

SOMEHOW, ALL THE OTHER BEARS WERE CONVINCED THAT THE TALL BEAR WITH GLASSES NEXT DOOR WAS THE ONE WHO HAD BROKEN IN.

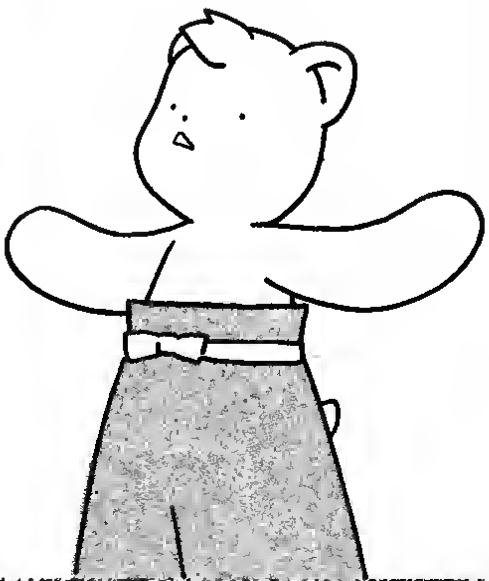


"THAT'S NOT TRUE," PROTESTED THE LITTLE BEAR.
"KUMA-SAN WOULD NEVER DO THAT!"

BUT THE OTHER BEARS WERE NOT CONVINCED.

"HOW DO YOU KNOW?" THEY ASKED.
"YOU WEREN'T HOME, SO THERE'S NO WAY YOU COULD KNOW WHO DID IT."





"I DON'T KNOW, BUT I KNOW IT WASN'T KUMA-SAN." THE LITTLE BEAR WAS DESPERATE TO MAKE THE OTHER BEARS UNDERSTAND.

"KUMA-SAN IS A VERY GOOD BEAR," SHE CONTINUED. "WHEN I WAS ATTACKED BY CROWS IN THE WOODS, KUMA-SAN CAME TO MY RESCUE. LATELY, HE'S EVEN STARTED TALKING TO ME...AND HE LISTENS TO ME TOO."

BUT THE OTHER BEARS WOULDN'T UNDERSTAND.

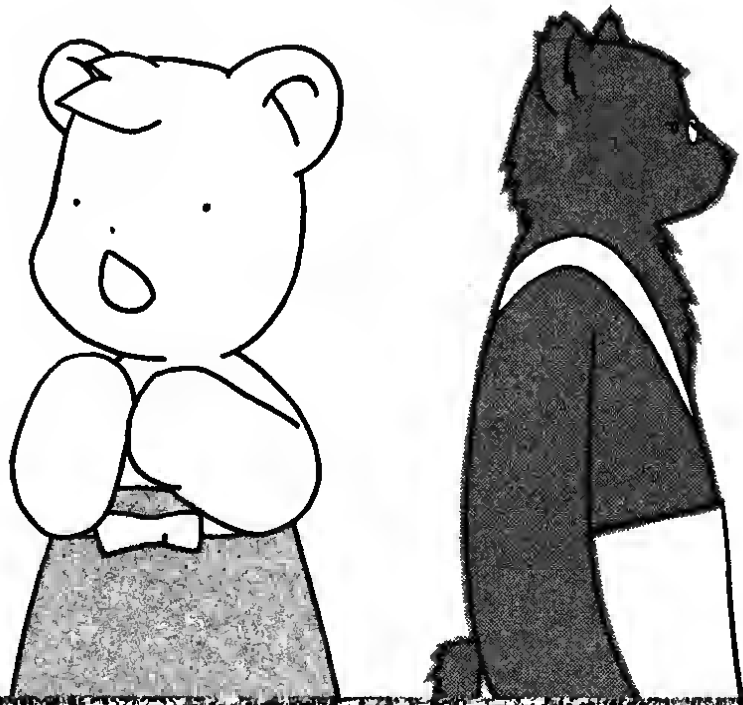
"I'LL BET HE JUST GOT YOU TO TRUST HIM SO YOU WOULD TALK ABOUT THE THINGS IN YOUR HOUSE!"
"THAT'S HOW HE KNEW WHAT WAS IN YOUR KITCHEN."
"WHAT A DESPICABLE BEAR," THEY ALL CHIMED.

THE LITTLE BEAR SHOOK HER HEAD. "THAT'S NOT TRUE. THAT'S NOT TRUE AT ALL! KUMA-SAN WOULD NEVER DO A THING LIKE THAT."

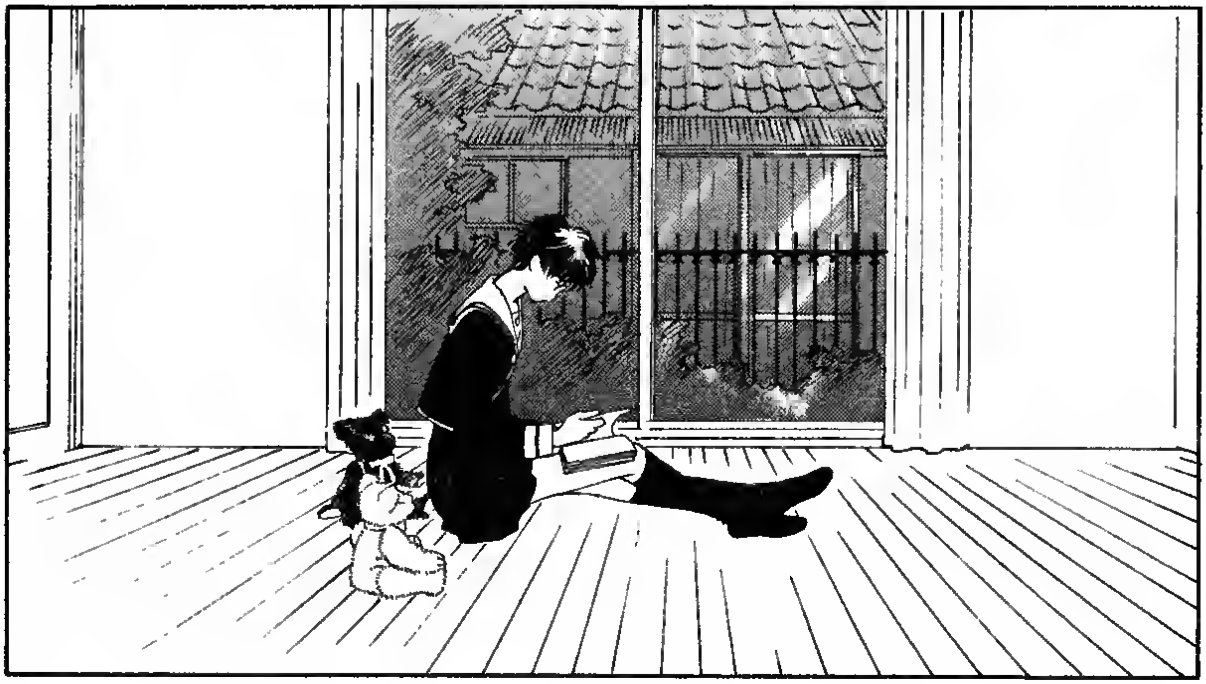
"HOW CAN YOU BE SURE?" THEY RETORTED.

THE LITTLE BEAR ANSWERED, STRONG AND CLEAR, "I CAN TELL WHEN I LOOK INTO HIS EYES."

"WHEN I LOOK IN HIS EYES, I CAN TELL WHAT KIND OF BEAR HE IS, AND I KNOW WHAT HE'S THINKING. THE EYES NEVER LIE."



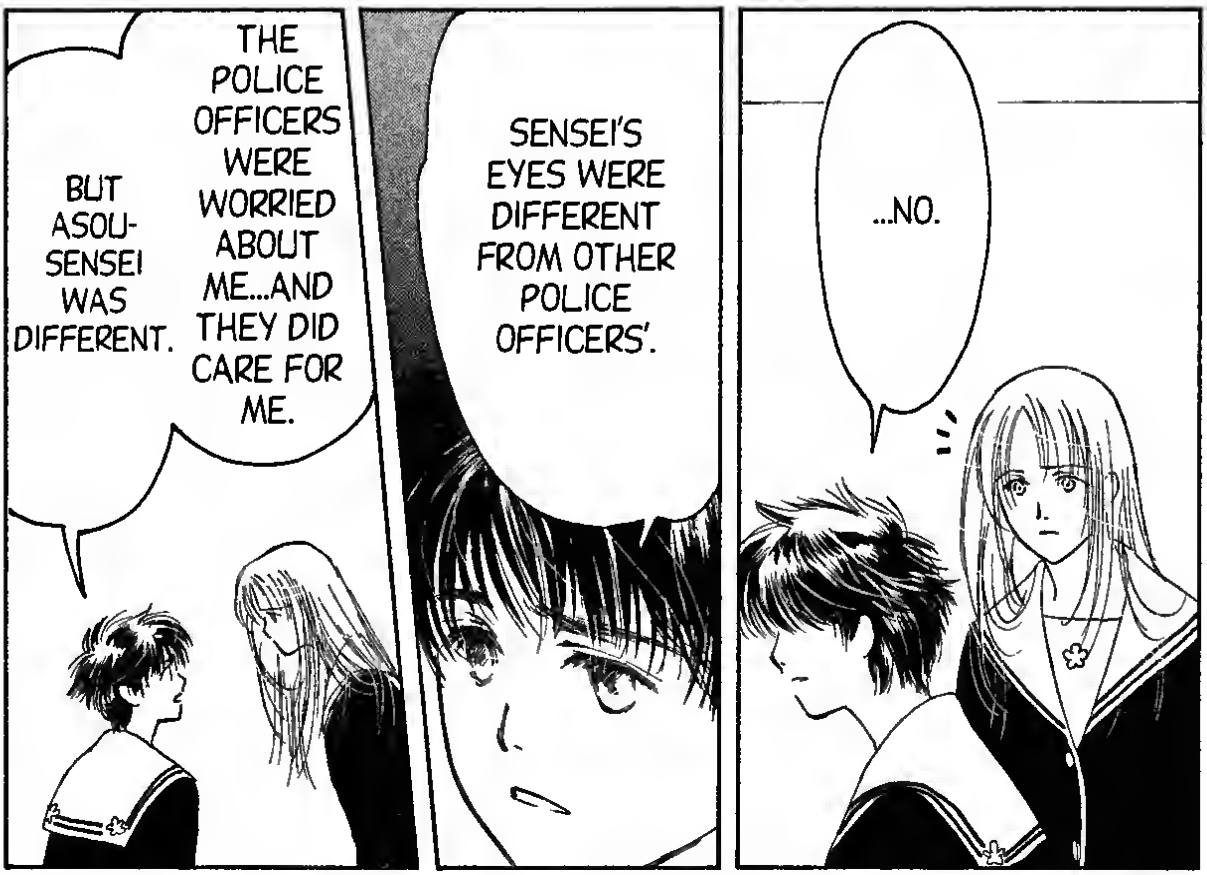
"THE EYES NEVER LIE..."



...THE DOOR WAS WIDE OPEN. YOU REALLY SHOULD LOCK IT.
HINA...
ARE YOU THINKING...
....ABOUT ASOU-SENSEI AGAIN?

ALL THIS TIME I'D BEEN THINKING--THE WAY ASOU-SENSEI LOOKED--I'D *SEEN* THAT LOOK BEFORE.
I REALIZED IT HAD TO DO WITH YOUR PAST KIDNAPPING INCIDENTS...
...BUT FOR THE LONGEST TIME, I COULDN'T FIGURE OUT WHY.
THEN IT HIT ME... IT WAS THE LOOK OF A COP.
THERE ALWAYS WERE A LOT OF POLICE OFFICERS AROUND YOUR HOUSE...

THE LOOK OF A POLICEMAN...?


...NO.
SENSEI'S EYES WERE DIFFERENT FROM OTHER POLICE OFFICERS'.
THE POLICE OFFICERS WERE WORRIED ABOUT ME...AND THEY DID CARE FOR ME.
BUT ASOU-SENSEI WAS DIFFERENT.

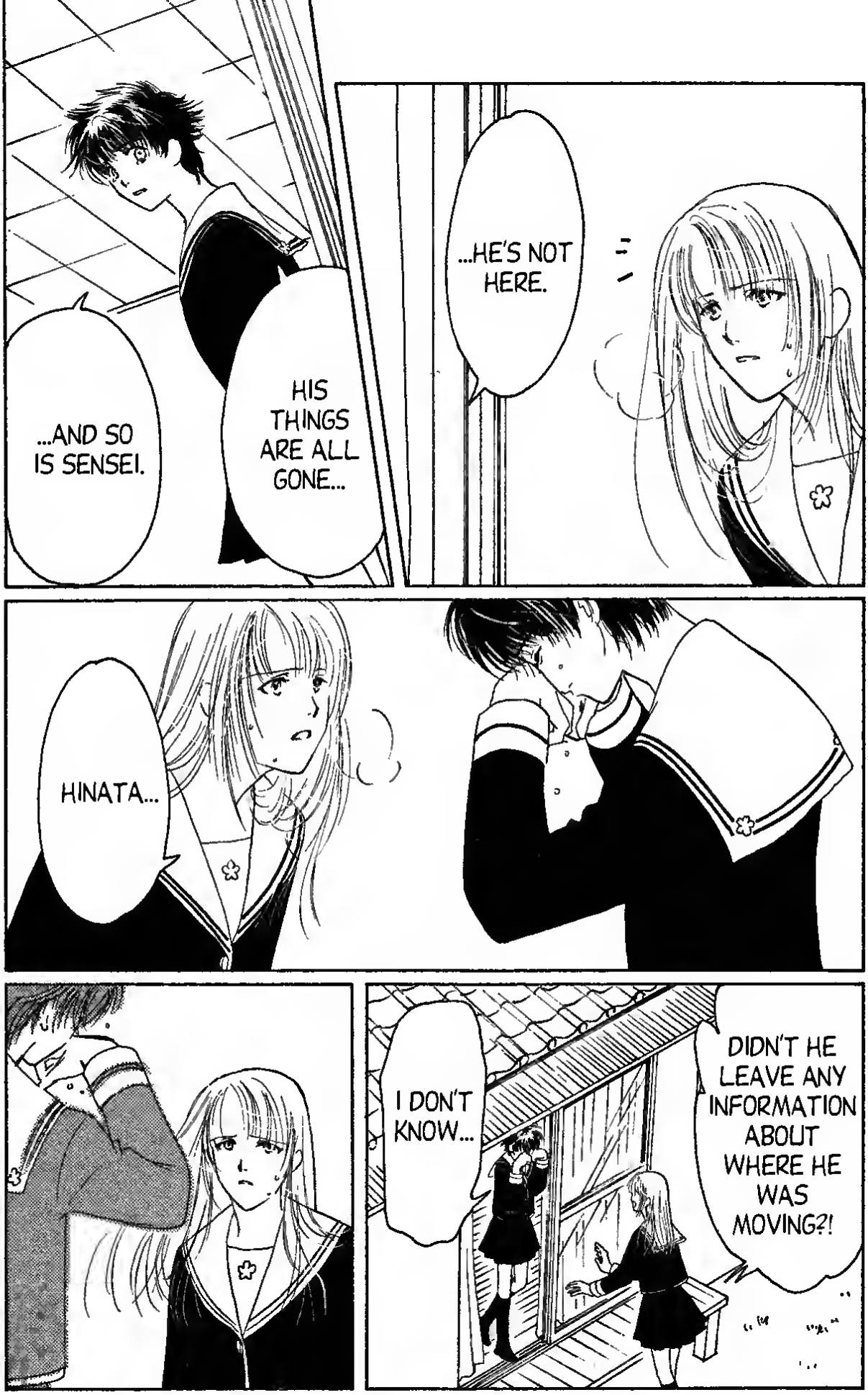
SENSEI'S EYES WERE MORE... MORE...
BUT HE'S *DIFFERENT.*
BUT...YOU *KNOW* ASOU-SENSEI IS A FORMER POLICE OFFICER. HIS JOB WAS TO PROTECT YOU, HINA...
...THEY WERE JUST...SO *KIND.*

"THE EYES NEVER LIE."
"WHEN I LOOK IN HIS EYES, I CAN TELL WHAT KIND OF BEAR HE IS, AND I KNOW WHAT HE'S THINKING."
THEN...MAYBE ASOU-SENSEI REALLY WAS SHOWING YOU HIS TRUE FEELINGS, HINATA.
I THINK I UNDERSTAND NOW.
...TOUKO-CHAN.

WHAT? WHAT DO YOU UNDERSTAND?
HINA?!
MY OWN TRUE FEELINGS!

HINATA--
WHAT ARE
YOU DOING?!
HEY--
WAIT,
HINA!
SENSEI!
SENSEI!

HUFF
HUFF
YOU CAN'T GO IN PEOPLE'S HOUSES WITHOUT PERMISSION.

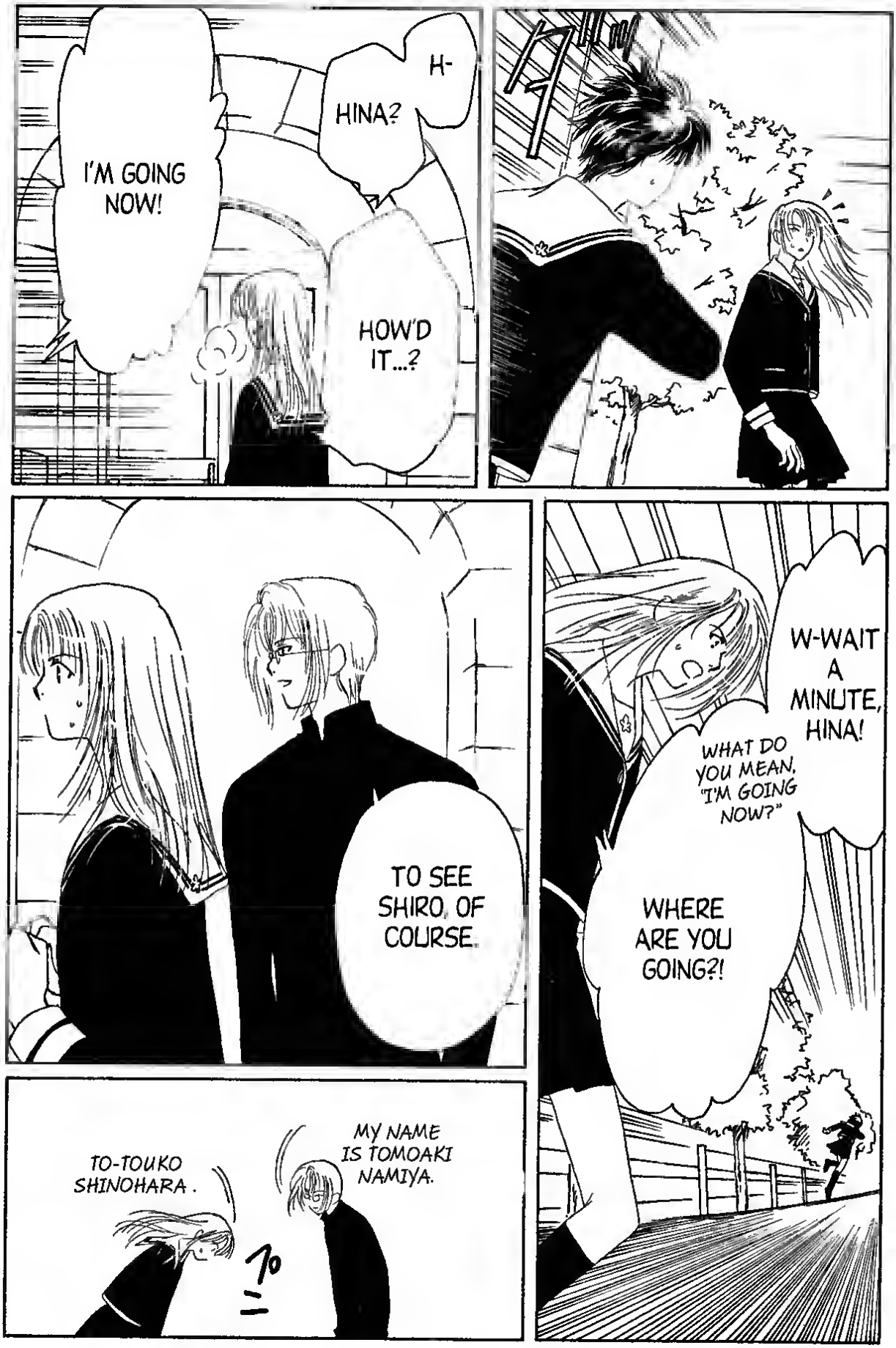

...HE'S NOT HERE.
HIS THINGS ARE ALL GONE...
...AND SO IS SENSEI.
HINATA...
I DON'T KNOW...
DIDN'T HE LEAVE ANY INFORMATION ABOUT WHERE HE WAS MOVING?!

IF YOU GIVE UP, IT ALL ENDS HERE!
YOU CAN'T GIVE UP!
TOMO-KUN!!
SOMEBODY WHO KNOWS SENSE!?!
ISN'T THERE SOMEBODY?

Caffe Piffle Pring
カーン カラ
I WONDER HOW HINA-CHAN IS DOING?
I JUST HOPE SHE ISN'T CRYING...
HINA-CHAN!!
DO YOU KNOW WHERE ASOU-SENSEI WENT?!

I NEED TO SEE SENSEI!
WHY?
I HAVE SOMETHING TO TELL HIM.
I REALIZED SOMETHING IMPORTANT WHEN I READ YOUR BOOK,
TOMO-KUN...THE EYES DON'T LIE! THAT'S WHY I NEED TO *TALK* TO SENSEI.

SHIRO IS MOVING TO A NEW TOWN.
BUT WHEN?!
TODAY.
HUFF HUFF
afe
iffle
incc


I'M GOING NOW!
H-
HINA?
HOW'D IT...?
W-WAIT A MINUTE, HINA!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "I'M GOING NOW?"
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?!
TO SEE SHIRO, OF COURSE.
TO-TOUKO SHINOHARA.
MY NAME IS TOMOAKI NAMIYA.

I JUST HOPE SHE WON'T HAVE TO CRY ANYMORE.
I THINK HINA MIGHT JUST BE ABLE TO CHANGE THAT HARD-HEADED SHIRO.
I THINK SHE'LL BE ALL RIGHT.

YOU'RE LEAVING WITHOUT EVEN SAYING GOODBYE TO ASAHI-SAN.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
...ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE ALL RIGHT WITH THIS?
DON'T LIE.
MY JOB IS FINISHED. I HAVE NOTHING MORE TO SAY TO HER.
WELL, OF COURSE. OUR RELATIONSHIP WAS BASED PURELY ON WORK...
YOU MAY NEVER SEE HER AGAIN.
ABOUT WHAT?!

YOU ARE VERY SERIOUS ABOUT YOUR WORK.
BUT YOUR FEELINGS TOWARD ASAHI-SAN WEREN'T JUST PROFESSIONAL, WERE THEY?
NO, IT WASN'T.
I UNDERSTAND THAT AS WELL.
YOU MIGHT WORK HARDER TO PROTECT SOMEONE IF THEY'RE SPECIAL TO YOU.
AND EMOTIONAL INVOLVEMENT ISN'T NECESSARILY DETRIMENTAL TO THIS JOB.
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE NOT TO HAVE ANY FEELINGS ABOUT ANYONE.
I KNOW THAT.

BUT SHE JUST THOUGHT I WAS JUST A GOOD PERSON.
HINA HAS BEEN KIDNAPPED SEVERAL TIMES SINCE SHE WAS LITTLE.
AND EVERY TIME, HER FATHER BLAMED HER SERVANTS OR DRIVERS, SAYING THAT THEY DIDN'T TAKE ENOUGH PRECAUTIONS.
SINCE SHE DIDN'T WANT ANYONE TO BE BLAMED ANYMORE FOR HER SAKE, SHE DECIDED TO LIVE ON HER OWN, STARTING IN HIGH SCHOOL.
HER FATHER SAID IF SHE WANTED TO LIVE ALONE SO BADLY, HE WOULDN'T HELP HER OUT AT ALL.
BUT OF COURSE HE WORRIED ABOUT HER SAFETY, SO HE HIRED ME.

SHE LIVES IN THAT GREAT BIG HOUSE ALL BY HERSELF.
SHE'S ALWAYS SMILING, BUT SHE MUST BE LONELY.
...AND WHAT ABOUT YOU?
AND THAT'S WHERE I CAME INTO THE PICTURE.
SOMEONE WHO WOULD JUST SPEND TIME WITH HER. THAT'S PROBABLY WHY SHE FELL IN LOVE WITH ME.
HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT ASAHI-SAN?
I...

ASOU-SENSEI!!
TOMO-KUN...
...TOLD ME WHERE YOU WERE!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?!
YOU...!
I'M JUST A BODYGUARD. I HAVE NO CONTROL OVER THINGS LIKE THIS.
I TOLD YOU TO STAY ON TOP OF THE SITUATION!

SENSEI! NO--ASOU-SAN!
I FORCED HIM TO TELL ME!
THERE'S SOMETHING I NEED TO SAY TO YOU!
TO SAY TO ME?
LOOK, IF YOU'RE GOING TO GET ON MY CASE FOR LYING TO YOU...
IT'S NOT THAT!
WHEN I FOUND OUT YOU WERE JUST BEING NICE TO ME BECAUSE OF YOUR JOB, I CRIED.
AND I'M SORRY ABOUT THAT.

WHY...?
BUT, YOU KNOW ...I REALLY DO LOVE YOU, ASOU-SAN.
BECAUSE WHEN YOU WERE WITH ME, YOUR EYES WERE ALWAYS SO KIND.
IT MAY HAVE BEEN JUST WORK TO YOU, BUT TO ME ...I LOVED YOU FOR IT.

AT FIRST, I FELL IN LOVE WITH YOU BECAUSE YOU DID SO MANY THINGS THAT I LOVED.

BUT FROM NOW ON, ASOU-SAN... WHATEVER YOU DO FOR YOURSELF... I'LL LOVE YOU FOR THAT.

THAT'S WHY...
...THAT'S WHY I LOVE YOU, ASOU-SAN.

YOU WIN.
...ALL RIGHT.
HUH? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
I MEAN THAT I...

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WELL, DON'T JUST ASK ME OVER AND OVER!
REALLY?!
REALLY REALLY?!
OH, NO! IT'S TIME FOR MY SHINKANSEN* TRAIN!
WHAT?!
YAYY!
YAYYYY!
YAYYYY!!!
ARE YOU GOING TO MAKE IT? ARE YOU GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT? SHOULD I RUN TO THE PLATFORM WITH YOU?
I'M SORRY! I'M MAKING YOU LATE!

*Shinkansen train: bullet train

WHAT'S THIS?
MY PHONE NUMBER.
YOURS, ASOU-SAN?!
NO
NO
NO
I SUPPOSE YOU WANTED SOMEBODY ELSE'S?

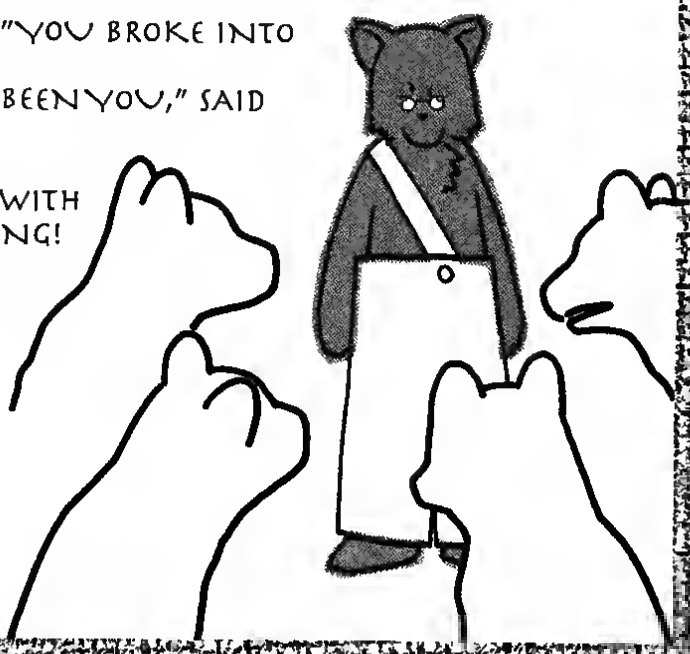
SO...I CAN CALL YOU?!
...YEAH.

"SO YOU THINK I'M A BURGLAR," SAID A VOICE FROM BEHIND.

THE LITTLE BEAR TURNED AROUND, AND THERE WAS KUMA-SAN, GLASSES AND ALL.

"YES," SAID ONE OF THE BEARS. "YOU BROKE INTO HER HOUSE, DIDN'T YOU?"
"THAT'S RIGHT. IT MUST HAVE BEEN YOU," SAID ANOTHER.

BUT THE LITTLE BEAR SHOUTED WITH ALL HER MIGHT, "YOU'RE WRONG! IT WASN'T KUMA-SAN!"



KUMA-SAN WALKED INTO THE KITCHEN. EVERYONE WATCHED TO SEE WHAT HE WOULD DO. BUT KUMA-SAN JUST KNELT DOWN AND PICKED SOMETHING UP.

IN HIS PAW WAS A BLACK BIRD FEATHER.

"THAT'S A CROW'S FEATHER," THE LITTLE BEAR SAID.

THEN KUMA-SAN SAID, "REMEMBER WHEN THE CROWS CHASED YOU OUT OF THE FOREST WHILE YOU WERE PICKING BERRIES?"

THE LITTLE BEAR NODDED HER HEAD. "THE CROWS MUST HAVE REMEMBERED THAT, AND COME TO STEAL YOUR BERRIES." THE LITTLE BEAR THOUGHT THAT MADE PERFECT SENSE.

THEN ALL OF THE OTHER BEARS WHO HAD ACCUSED KUMA-SAN OF BEING A BURGLAR WENT SILENT. "OH, WELL, WE MADE A MISTAKE," THEY MUMBLED TO THEMSELVES, AND WALKED OUT OF THE LITTLE BEAR'S HOUSE.

THE LITTLE BEAR AND KUMA-SAN WERE ALL ALONE.

THE LITTLE BEAR BOWED HER HEAD AND SAID, "I'M SORRY I CAUSED YOU SO MUCH TROUBLE. I KNOW HOW YOU HATE TROUBLE, KUMA-SAN."

BUT KUMA-SAN DID NOT SAY ANYTHING AT ALL.

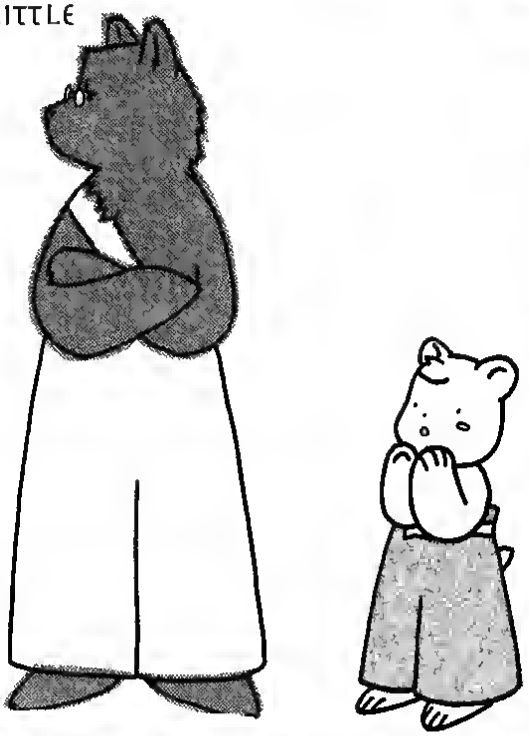
INSTEAD, HE BEGAN TO CLEAN UP THE LITTLE BEAR'S KITCHEN.

THE LITTLE BEAR SAID, "OH, NO, I'LL DO THAT!" BUT KUMA-SAN DID NOT ANSWER. HE CONTINUED TO CLEAN.

SUDDENLY THE LITTLE BEAR REALIZED THAT KUMA-SAN WAS HELPING HER. SHE BEGAN TO FEEL HAPPY AGAIN.

BY THE TIME THEY FINISHED CLEANING, IT WAS ALREADY NIGHT.

"THANK YOU VERY MUCH," SAID THE LITTLE BEAR.
"EVERYTHING IS SO CLEAN! PLEASE... AS A THANK-YOU GIFT, LET ME COOK YOU DINNER. OH! BUT IF I START COOKING NOW, IT WILL BE VERY LATE BEFORE IT IS SERVED."



JUST THEN, KUMA-SAN SAID SOMETHING...BUT HE SAID IT VERY QUIETLY, SO THE LITTLE BEAR COULD NOT HEAR.
"WHAT? DID YOU SAY SOMETHING?" SHE ASKED. KUMA-SAN TRIED TO SAY IT ONCE MORE.
"YOU...CAN COME TO MY HOUSE. I ALREADY HAVE DINNER PREPARED."
"REALLY?" THE LITTLE BEAR WAS TOO HAPPY FOR WORDS.
KUMA-SAN WAS INVITING HER TO DINNER. THIS MEANT HE WAS FINALLY ALLOWING HER TO COME INSIDE HIS HOUSE.

KUMA-SAN TURNED HIS FACE AWAY, BUT THE LITTLE BEAR COULD TELL BY HIS EYES THAT HE WAS JUST FEELING BASHFUL.
"HURRY UP," KUMA-SAN SAID, AND STARTED BACK TOWARD HIS HOUSE.
"OKAY!" SAID THE LITTLE BEAR, RUNNING AS FAST AS SHE COULD TO CATCH UP.
AND THEN, SO NO ONE COULD HEAR, SHE ADDED, "I HOPE WE CAN BE EVEN BETTER FRIENDS NOW."

The End

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